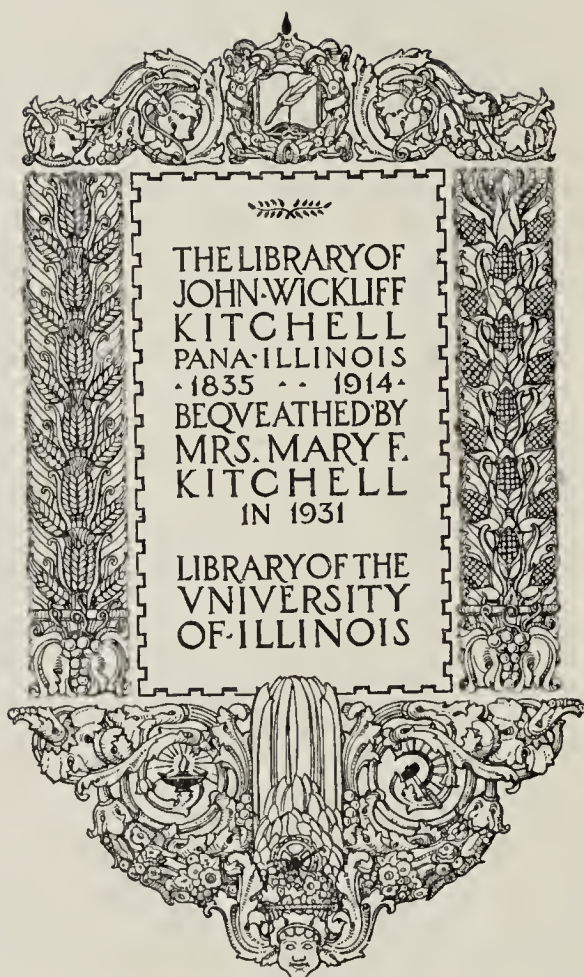


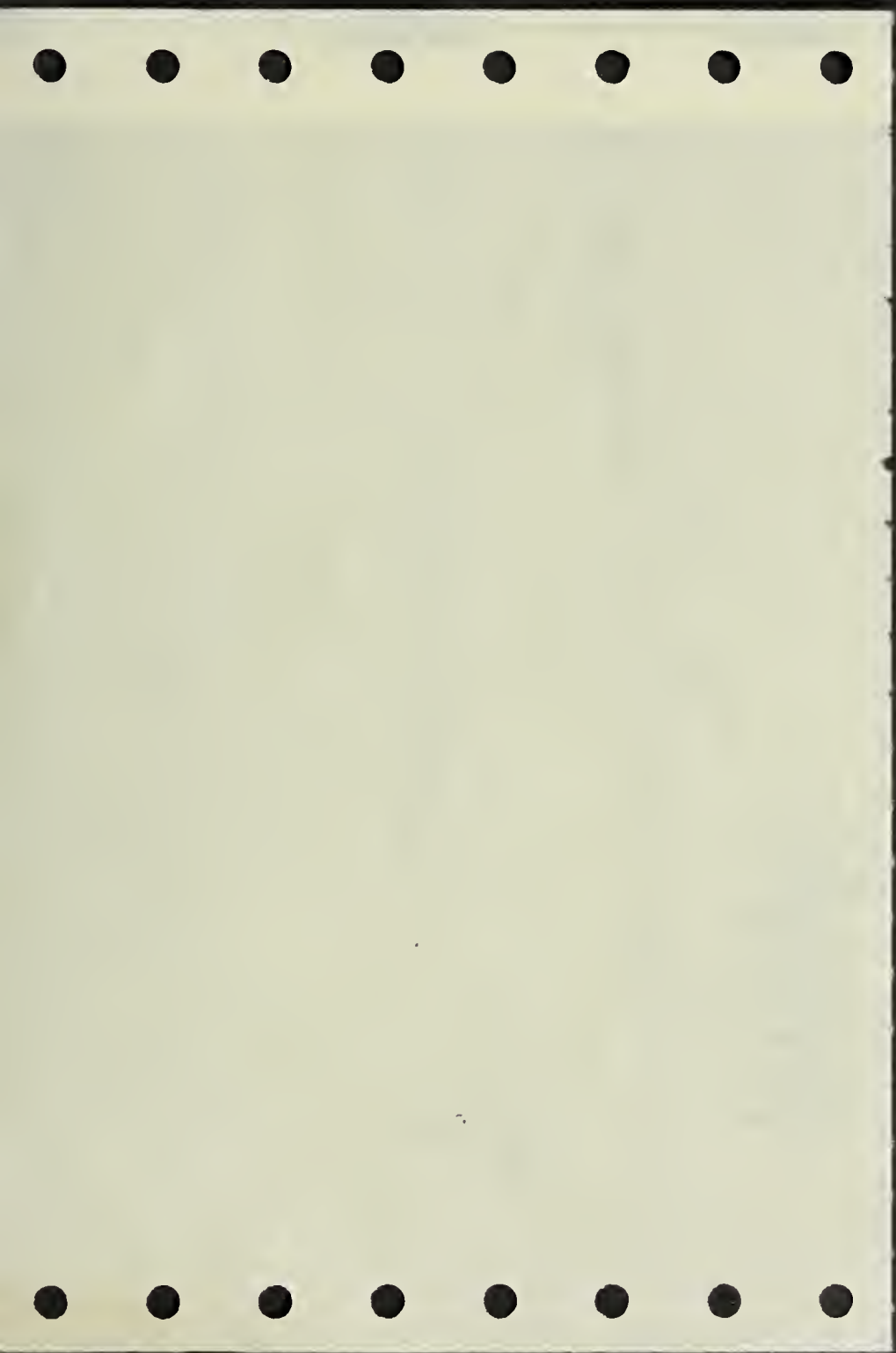
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HISTORY OF ROME,

AND OF THE ROMAN PEOPLE,

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE INVASION OF THE
BARBARIANS.

By VICTOR DURUY,

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE, EX-MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, ETC.

TRANSLATED BY M. M. RIPLEY,

EDITED BY

THE REV. J. P. MAHAFFY,

PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT HISTORY, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

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1894.

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² This collar, one of the most precious jewels in the *Cabinet de France*, is composed of five cylinders, alternating with six pendants, two of the latter being cameos, and four of them gold coins (of Hadrian, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Geta) of great rarity. One of the cameos representing Julia Domna is given in the text on p. 576 of Vol. VI.; the other is the bust of the helmeted Minerva.

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HISTORY OF ROME.

ELEVENTH PERIOD.

THE AFRICAN AND SYRIAN PRINCES (180-235 A. D.).

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER XC. (*Continued.*)

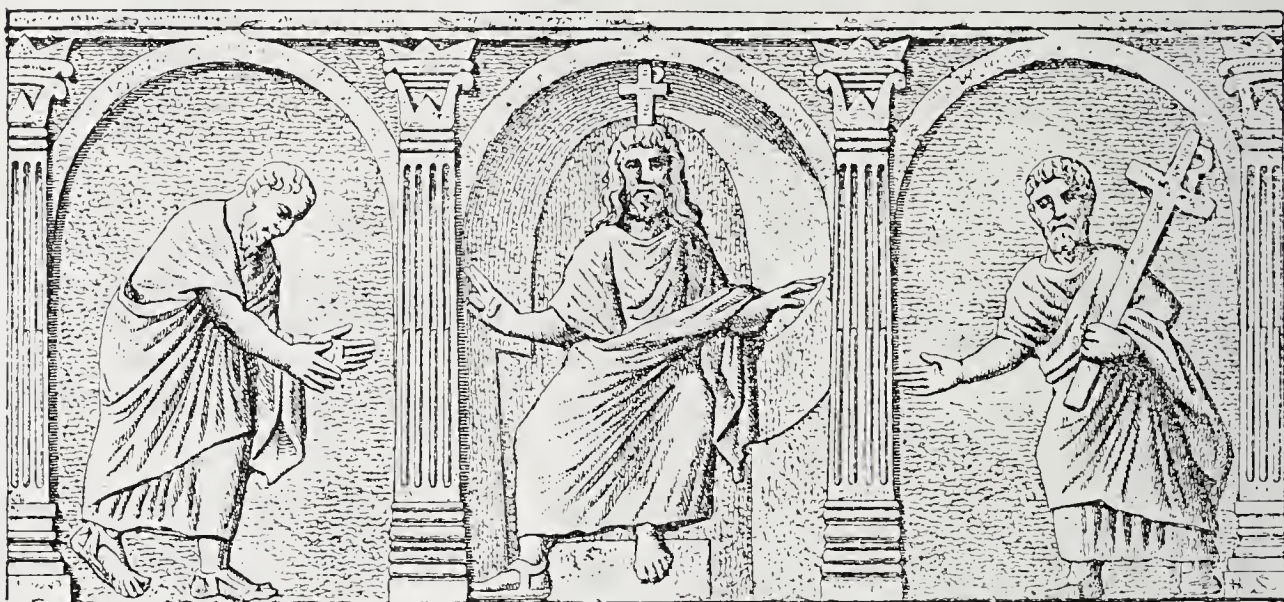
THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

II. — TRANSFORMATION OF THE MESSIANIC IDEA.

IN the midst of the confusion of systems and rites, Christianity had already, in the time of Severus, made for itself a large place. Springing up in a country for centuries condemned to every misery, it arose at once out of despair and hope. Since the captivity, the Jews had always expected the mighty hand which should restore the house of David. But in face of this Roman Empire, which was to them impregnable, it was inevitable that the Messianic idea should undergo a transformation. Cursing the present, they had looked for the future in the one direction only by which, as it now seemed to them, this future could arrive, — towards the heaven which should raise up a Messiah, the Saviour of the race. The earthly conqueror, vainly expected, had given place to the conqueror of souls; the New Jerusalem became a celestial Jerusalem.

Up to this time, humanity had honored its gods with a selfish worship, in the hope of obtaining worldly advantages from them, or of appeasing their anger; now, an ideal of justice, of goodness, and of love being offered to it, a new sentiment — the love of

God — sprang up in the human heart. This God had been revealed to the faith of the lowly when, in place of a promise of national triumph, they accepted a hope of spiritual life; and this faith was destined to win even the proudest natures, showing them the desired Mediator in the Divine Man, not ascending from earth to heaven like the Olympians, with all the stains of earth upon him, but coming down from heaven to earth with a celestial purity and an infinite strength of love. The heathen had long sought a mediator between the Creator and the creature, they had even seemed to have a glimpse of such a being; but never under



JESUS BETWEEN TWO APOSTLES IN THE ATTITUDE OF ADORATION.¹

this aspect of Jesus, who is so divine because so human, — a God dying upon the Cross to redeem the world; the Mediator who is at the same time the Redeemer. From a doctrinal point of view the whole of the Christian religion is embodied in this conception; outside of this are only means of action to apply the principle and develop its consequences.

The masters of the Roman world gained nothing by the transformation of Jewish ideas into Christian, resulting from this new conception of the expected Messiah. The prophets had announced to all the mighty that they should fall under the sword of Israel;

¹ From a sarcophagus at Arles, which serves as altar-front in the church of St. Trophimus. Christ, seated upon a *scabellum*, his head surmounted by the cruciform monogram, is giving his law (in the form of an unrolled volume) to the two Apostles. Cf. E. Le Blant, *Études sur les sarcophages de la ville d'Arles*, pl. xxvii. and p. 44.

the Sibyl and Saint John condemned them to perish, with their gods of wood and all their sensual delights, in the flames kindled by the divine wrath, while those who overcame the powers of darkness received the promise of immortality.¹ Yet in a political point of view this promise disengaged Christianity, in the first phase of its existence, from all earthly ambition. It would seem that, spreading, with its principles of human equality and community of goods, among the destitute classes, it must have introduced a spirit of revolt. But by a fatal exaggeration of the teaching of indifference in which, for four centuries, all the philosophies had united,² the primitive Church added to its fundamental dogma of redemption a contempt for the present life, — which, however, had its share in the redemption of humanity. If this was not the sentiment of its first hour, we shall see that it was, at least to many, that of its second.

Pre-occupied with heaven, and the rewards in reserve for his faith, the Christian did not envy the worldlings their riches and their enjoyments. He left the things of earth as he found them, because existence here below was to him only a life of trial, the earliest termination of which would be the best; while the other, that beyond the tomb, was the true life, and ardently desired. "Let him fear to die whom hell awaits," said Saint Cyprian; "but the Christian, inmate of a house whose walls are tottering and whose roof is trembling, passenger on board a vessel which the waves are about to engulf, why should he not bless the hand which, hastening his departure, restores him to heaven, his own country?"³ Christianity did not, then, change the conditions of life, but it changed the conditions of death; and this new solution of the terrible problem was of itself the greatest of revolutions.

Notwithstanding the temptation, which always exists, to demand of death its secret, the ancients had contented themselves with

¹ Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* iii. 12) terminates his search for the sovereign good by these words: *Id vero nihil aliud potest esse quam immortalitas.*

² Indifference to civic duties, and disdain for worldly good, were the lessons of the New Academy and Zeno, of Pyrrho and Epicurus. "Christianity will adopt as its own all these sentiments of aversion; it will show even more disdain for political action; it will preach indifference with greater ardor, and it will crown all its contempt by despising the very philosophy which had already taught contempt for all else; and the more thoroughly to withdraw the soul from earth, the Christian religion will offer to humanity only that good which is not of this world" (Martha, *Lucrèce*, p. 200).

³ *De Mortalitate*, 25.

admitting, without much argument on the subject, a vague existence beyond the grave.¹ In those old days life was rude; to lose it was often to gain rest and peace,—*requiem aeternam* is the language of the Church to this day. It was the time when Greece represented death under the form of a beautiful sleeping boy, whose drooping hand held an inverted torch. But mind becomes developed; conscience is enlightened, and projects gleams of light into the darkness of the tomb. Thither men are followed by the same justice which society, in becoming civilized, seeks to establish upon the earth. Rewards for the good are placed there, and chastisements for the wicked, as is the case in the forum before the praetor; and that judgment of the dead which Homer reserved for heroes is extended to all men. The city of shades becomes populous and civilized, like the city of men. The Elysian life is submitted to the moral laws of recompense, and its pleasures, depicted on funeral monuments, continue those of the life on earth. It is to this point of equality between the two existences that the Graeco-Roman philosophy had brought the eschatology of the pagans.

But the movement, once begun, does not stop. The development of religious thought pursues its course, and the equilibrium between the two existences is destroyed: heaven prevails over earth, the future life over the present; the latter condemned and cursed, the former glorified and awaited with impatience.

After having blindly sought for the Divinity in the religions of Greece, Phrygia, Egypt, and Phoenicia, the Romans had seen coming to them a new God who went to the hearts of the refined and the afflicted. There were many souls whom the gross naturalism of the state religion offended; and in spite of the mitigation of servitude, slavery was still to this society a bleeding

¹ To the present day, man has been able to find but three solutions to the problem of death. The soul, the vital spark, returns and loses itself in the centre of universal life: this is the *Nirvāna* of India, and indifference to personal existence: or it goes to enjoy with delight the same pleasures which it has possessed upon earth: this is the love of physical life, the Graeco-Roman and Mohammedan solution; or else, in an eternal rapture, it will contemplate God face to face: this is divine love, but also a sort of annihilation in God. Science has a different dream: since nothing is lost, thought must subsist as force: separated from the body, — its imperfect organ, — it will endure, and intelligence will arrive at the knowledge of all things. This is for humanity that which takes place in the individual: the need of knowing succeeding the need of loving. But perfect science is the perfect knowledge of the true, the good, and the beautiful, — that is, of God himself: and unto that he will attain in the higher life who shall have made the greatest effort to approach to it in the present life.

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wound in its side. And now, behold hope is brought to these “desperate classes,” as Pliny calls them;¹ but not that of earth. The old abode which sunlight and life made once so beautiful, has become a vale of tears which the divine vengeance is about to fill with lamentations; and the habitation of the dead, formerly so chill and sombre, is now the celestial Jerusalem, radiant with youth, brightness, and love, where pious souls shall dwell eternally. “The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. . . . They shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels . . . and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. . . . Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished.”

GENIUS OF SLEEP OR OF DEATH.²

¹ . . . *Coli rura ab ergastulis pessimum est et quidquid agitur a desperantibus.* We have seen what was the condition of the *humiliores*, and for the immense class of the freedmen, the ordinance of Commodus. (See Vol. VI. p. 559, note 1.) In the middle of the third century Origen regarded as an honor to Christianity the reproach which Celsus and the pagan of the *Octavius* made against it, — of recruiting itself among men of low condition. “Yes,” said he, “we go to all those disdained by philosophy, — to the woman, to the slave, even to the robber.” In doing so, the Christians were faithful to the pure doctrine of the Master, who was so great because he loved the little ones. In the fourth century Saint Jerome said again: *Ecclesia Christi de vili plebecula congregata est* (*Opera*, iv. 289, ed. of 1693). The paintings of the catacombs prove the very humble condition of the artists who executed them, and of the dead who had ordered them.

² Oxford, *Marm. Oxon.* pl. 15. See Vol. V. p. 559, the Genius of Death of the Louvre.

The generation passed, and the earth was not destroyed. But the Sibyl and the prophets of the Apocalypse constantly renewed the fearful menace, which was a promise of endless torments for the haughty masters of the earth, and of eternal bliss for their victims.¹ "These unfortunate men," says a writer of the time, speaking of the Christians, "fancying to themselves that they are immortal, despise punishments, and voluntarily give themselves up to death."² The love of heaven led them to hatred of earth; they henceforth had before their eyes only "God and Eternity, with their tremendous majesty."

The true character of the revolution which took place in the obscure depths of Roman society is found in this new view of our destiny much more than in moral reformation, since humanity had already, as we have shown,³ been put in possession of all the precepts which are needed to regulate this world's existence. Life was purified, but became gloomy in the living tomb where those confined it who pushed this revolution to its logical consequences; and the Roman magistrates, not being able to see beyond its outward manifestations, found in them the two things which form the grand drama of persecutions,—contempt of human society and its laws, which raised up executioners; and love of death, which made victims.

This hatred of the flesh, which the ancient Jews had not known, but which philosophy taught,—this aspiration after death, so contrary to the conception which paganism had formed of life,—could not have been produced except in a small number of stricken and suffering souls. But the heaven, resplendent with light, which Christianity opened to their gaze; its teachings, which addressed themselves to the noblest instincts of the conscience; the penetrating sweetness of the parables, and the grand poem of the Passion,—won all those in whom were found the two most potent faculties of our being: sentiment and imagination. And, along

¹ St. Matthew xxiv. 29–34; Origen, *Contra Celsum*, vii. 9.

² Lucian, *Peregrinus*, 13. See in Vol. V. p. 497, what Marcus Aurelius said of the Christians. Epictetus, Galen, and the advocate of paganism in the *Octavius* say the same.

³ In Vol. VI., chapter on "Ideas." M. Reuss, in his *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, says very justly (p. 650): "The main point is that the originality of the Gospel consists not so much in the novelty of certain dogmas or of certain moral precepts as in the novelty of the basis which it gives to the religious life."

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE SECOND FLAVIAN HOUSE.

CRISPUS, BROTHER OF THE EMPEROR CLAUDIUS II.

CLAUDIA, wife of the Dardanian EUTROPIUS.

CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS marries: 1. HELENA, ancestress of the elder branch; 2. THEODORA, ancestress of the younger branch.

Elder Branch.

Constantius Chlorus and Helena.

Constantine the Great marries: 1, Minervina; 2, Fausta.

Crispus, killed in 326.

1, Constantine II.,
killed in 340.

2, Constantius II.,
died in 361,
leaving a daughter
who marries
the Emperor Gratian.

3, Constans,
killed in 350.

4, 5, and 6,
three daughters,
of whom one, Constantina,
marries Hannibalianus,
then Gallus;
another, Helena, marries
the Emperor Julian.

Younger Branch.

Constantius Chlorus and Theodora.

1, Constantine,
killed in 337.

2, Dalmatius Flavius
Hannibalianus.

1, Dalmatius Flavius
Julius, consul in 333,
Caesar in 335,
killed in 337.

2, Hannibalianus,
King of Pontus,
killed in 337.

3, Constantius,
consul in 335,
killed in 337,
marries
1, Galla; 2, Basilina.

4, Constantia marries,
in 313, the
Emperor Licinius;
a son of this marriage
is killed by order
of Constantine
the Great.

5, Anastasia marries
the Caesar Bassianus,
who is killed by order
of Constantine
the Great.

6, Eutropia marries
the consul Nepotianus.
Flavius Popilius
Nepotianus, Emperor
in 350, killed after
28 days' reign.

1, A son, killed in
337.

2, Gallus, son of Galla,
killed in 354.

3, A daughter,
without posterity.

4, Julian, son of Basilina,
Emperor in 361.

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of the
University of Illinois

with these allurements, what terrors did these men wield whose words appropriated the terrible beauty of the prophetic singers of the old dispensation, or the apocalyptic threatenings of the new, when they announced the speedy coming of the last days; when they portrayed empires destroyed, worlds reduced to dust, the trumpet of the judgment resounding in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and man endowed with immortal life, either for happiness or for misery!

Never had the world known such sanctions of moral action;¹ and they were produced at an epoch when the unvarying order of Nature was regarded as the plaything of angels and devils, who hovered about man, scattering his pathway with temptations which his own frailty created, or with prodigies which he beheld with the eyes of a mind dazzled by faith or fear.

Under Diocletian a farce was played, entitled, *The Testament of the Defunct Jupiter*. Of this we know only the title; but a poet of our own day has represented the god, who had so long made heaven and earth quake with his thunderbolts, broken down with age, decrepit, yet with a remnant of majesty, and banished far from mankind on a desert island, where he tries in vain to warm his shrunken hands before a pitiful fire of briers and thorns. The poet and the philosopher, who know how to estimate the grandeur of the fall, have at least a word of compassion for the outcasts of heaven. Religions, less generous, pursue with lively hatred those whom they have conquered; they take from them their power for good, and give them that for evil. The Christians still believed in the existence of the gods of paganism and in the prodigies performed in their temples; but they transformed these masters of the old world into devils infuriated for the destruction of the new. To conduct this war against humanity, they gave to these fallen divinities a chief who had as yet been known only among the Chaldaeans, in Persia, and to some extent in Judaea.² Thus Satan, who was destined to play so important a part in the

¹ The Apocalypse has created a new kind of oratory, by placing at the disposal of the Christian priest the terrors of hell and the bliss of paradise. Paganism never had anything like this.

² Satan is hardly mentioned thrice in the Old Testament. The book of Wisdom, in which he appears in his true character, was written, shortly before the Christian era, at Alexandria. [This is not true in the case of Job. — ED.]

Middle Ages, began his reign; he turned to evil the most legitimate pleasures, concealed a snare in all the magnificence of Nature, and spread terror over the earth, now become his kingdom. That which is within us,—these frailties and vices which a determined will keeps in restraint, which a vacillating will suffers to develop,—all this was made external, and the universe filled with malignant beings, who were in reality but part of ourselves. Humanity became twofold, and trembled before its own image; and the Christian, who believed himself perpetually surrounded by temptations to mortal sin, said with Saint John: “He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”¹

This doctrine of despair is as enduring as that of hope, because humanity must always have its sufferings and its diseased minds who can see only the sorrows of existence and cannot comprehend a Providence which permits evil to fall upon the innocent. For many centuries the votaries of Çâkyamuni have taught in the East to countless multitudes that life is the one evil, and the Alexandrians had just repeated that men ought to aspire to death as to deliverance.² The Jewish Preacher also uttered this melancholy cry, to which some fibre in every human soul seems to respond, “All is vanity.” And the cry has found an echo in all times: in the Middle Ages, in the full tide of the century of Louis XIV., and even in the midst of our clamorous and busy life. We have the poets and philosophers of malediction, Leopardi and Hartmann;³ while the Carthusians and the Trappists represent to us, under a religious form, weariness or ignorance of the world, the spirit of hatred towards the flesh, and that poetry of solitude at once bitter and sweet. To them, whether philosophers or anchorites, the sombre bride is always beautiful; and, from contrary reasons, they find sweetness in death: *la gentillezza del morir*.

¹ xii. 25. These words are still in harmony with the spirit of the Church, and are frequently repeated. I heard them recently in a sermon.

² The singular analogies which exist between the doctrine of Plotinus and the Buddhist *Nirvâna* have frequently been pointed out, — fortuitous analogies, which do not result from imitation, but from the same condition of minds.

³ Not to speak of René, Werther, and Manfred, who have brought into fashion a morbid sadness which their originators, Chateaubriand, Goethe, and Byron, did not share. A strange seet among the Russians, the Skoptzi, seem to owe their existence to a similar spirit.

III. — THE CHRISTIAN DOGMAS.

HOWEVER, thoughts like these do violence to human nature; and though the Roman Empire extended to those countries where exertion and the struggle for existence readily become a source of suffering, the doctrine of rest in God would have had, among the more virile populations of the West, only a transient duration, if the beliefs which had produced it had not been, so to speak, incarnated in the most strongly constituted sacerdotal body which ever existed. With a marvellous instinct for the government of souls, and by means of a labor of organization which has never ceased, the Church made definite and permanent that faith which, without her, would have been dispersed and lost, like precious perfume evaporating in an open vase.

With the Platonic theory of the *Logos*, or of the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus to his disciples, the revelation could continue after the disappearance of the revealer. In proportion then as life became more active in the Church, she prepared, according to the times, new organs for new functions, to ward off a peril or respond to a demand. This is the condition of every great and powerful existence. The primitive Church, that of the apostolic age, had become transformed. All that had been free and spontaneous, or vague and fluctuating,—doctrine, hierarchy, or discipline,—was precisely formulated and set in order for a mighty endeavor.¹ The Roman Catholics refuse to recognise this progressive Revolution, and the Protestants condemn it; yet it is by this that the Church has endured. What are the longest dynasties of kings and emperors by the side of the succession of her pontiffs, and

¹ Vol. VI. p. 406 *et seq.*; St. John xiv. 16, 26, and xvi. 13. See in 1 Cor. xiv. 26, what liberty Saint Paul allowed to “those who had received the gift of teaching or of revealing the secret things of God.” The ordinances of the Church of Alexandria (Bunsen, *Christianity and Mankind*, vol. vi.) yet say (ii. 41): ἔχωμεν πάντες τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ. The propagation of the faith was “by the living word.” J. Donaldson (*The Apostolical Fathers*, vol. i. p. 60, 1874), commenting on the words of Irenaeus, well says: “In fact, there was a spoken Christianity as well as a written Christianity; the former existed before the latter.” And he attempts to demonstrate what were the faith and the free constitution of the Church at this time when free speech was not fettered by the written formula, and when each body of Christians was independent under its *elders* and *inspectors*.

what institution has lived eighteen centuries? It is not generally recognized that of all the miracles this is the greatest, — human wisdom rearing a temple in which the noblest minds have lived so long, and which shelters so many still.

In the first and second centuries evangelical liberty was very great, and it was only gradually lost.¹ Most of the apologists of the epoch of the Antonines did not even belong to the clergy, and Eusebius² shows that for a long time there were volunteers for the faith, who spread abroad the glad tidings according to their own inspiration. From this resulted diversities, which at an early date produced what the constituted Church called “heresies.”

The Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers had taught, with some discrepancies which we cannot now define, the fundamental doctrine of the divinity of Christ, and, consequently, a revealed law. This law was recorded in numerous accounts of the life of Jesus, which had at first only a traditional value.³ To the early Fathers, the Holy Scriptures were above all the Pentateuch and the Prophets; even in the middle of the second century, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, said that it was far less important to consult the books than living tradition.⁴ But before the end of this

¹ Letter 72 of Saint Cyprian to Saint Stephen, bishop of Rome, closes with these words: *Qua in re nec nos vim cuiquam facimus aut legem damus, quando habeat in Ecclesiae administratione voluntatis suae arbitrium liberum unusquisque praepositus, rationem actus sui Domino redditurus.*

² *Hist. eccl.* iii. 37. What is termed the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv.) had itself, on some important points, respected the liberty of the faithful.

³ Donaldson, *The Apost.*, etc., pp. 68, 107, 155, 234, etc. Origen attests (*In Matth.* xii. 6) that some Christians did not find the divinity of Christ clearly expressed in the Gospel of Saint Matthew; and Photius, in his *Bibliotheca*, Cod. 126, addresses the same reproach to Saint Clement of Rome for his Epistle to the Corinthians, in which Jesus is nowhere called God, but the beloved child of God, the high priest, the head of souls. The pseudo-Hermas speaks in the same manner. See also the words of Saint Peter (i. 1, 2, 25), which are not contradicted by the Acts (ii. 36). Cf. Clemens Romanus, *Epist.*, ed. Hilgenfeld, 1876, after the manuscript discovered the year before at Constantinople. Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* iii. 34) gives the date of Clement's death as A. D. 101. The idea of a Messiah was exceedingly Jewish: that of a God become man was not so; and it is quite natural that in the early times it should have entered with great difficulty into the minds of the Jews converted to the Gospel. This was the case, for instance, with Cerinthus, the famous heresiarch, whom certain accounts place in communication with Saint John. Saint Ignatius, dying under Trajan, had combated the Ebionites, who denied the divinity of Jesus (*Ep. ad Magn.* 7-8; *ad Philad.* 6-9), and the Docetae, who rejected his humanity (*Ep. ad Smyrn.* 1-5; *ad Trall.* 6-10).

⁴ . . . τὰ παρὰ ζώσης φωνῆς καὶ μενούσης (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* iii. 39). Irenaeus (iii. 2) also said: *Non per litteras traditam veritatem, sed per vivam vocem.* According to Eusebius (*ibid.*), Papias could only have known and employed the Gospels of Saint Mark and of Saint

century the choice between all these accounts was made, and apostolic authority recognized in the three Synoptics, into which older writings had been fused,¹ and in the Gospel of Saint John, although this had been composed later, and differed from the three others on an essential point,—the doctrine of the Logos. This doctrine, which the Alexandrian Jew Philo had brilliantly enunciated, was related both to some ancient Egyptian beliefs, and at the same time to certain ideas of Plato. By giving rise in philosophic minds to the boldest speculations, it was destined to serve as a foundation for the Christian theology which made of the Messiah the Incarnate Word, while the Synoptics supplied to the ordinary preaching, to attract the multitude, their tender and charming parables, and the sombre and sublime narrative of the Passion. The Acts and the Epistles had likewise been admitted, so that the canon of the Scriptures was nearly determined, though no authority had as yet closed or promulgated it.² The Church, therefore, had

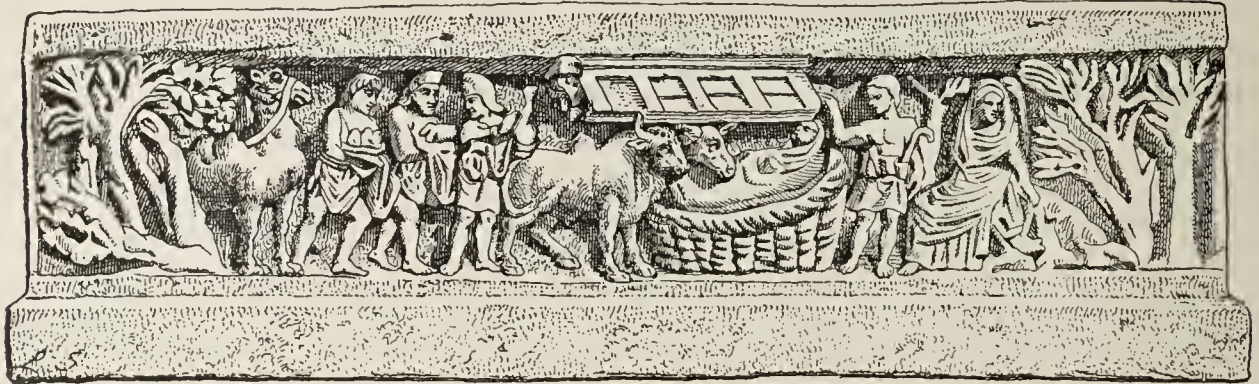
Matthew, of which he speaks with great liberty, the Apocalypse, the first Epistle of Saint Peter, and the first of Saint John. A very important work for the knowledge of the canon of the Scriptures towards the end of the second century is the *Fragment of Muratori* (so called), discovered in 1840 at Milan. [The best general guide is now G. Salmon's *Critical Introduction to the N. T.* London: J. Murray, 1885.—ED.]

¹ Saint Luke, in *proem.*, says, πολλοὶ ἐπεχίρησαν.

² I do not need to investigate when and how the canonical books were prepared; a multitude of learned works furnish information on this subject. My duty is to show what were the spirit and the organization of the Church at the epoch when its power was sufficiently great to enable it to exert an influence on Roman society and the destinies of the Empire. Now, this epoch corresponds to the reign of Severus. Under Marcus Aurelius, Celsus (Origen, *Contra Cels.* ii. 27) represented the Christians as at that time continually occupied in correcting and altering their Gospels, . . . *mutant pervertuntque*; and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* iv. 23, and v. 28) confirms this testimony. Origen, who died in 253, in fact says (*Hom. 1, in Luc.*): *Multi conati sunt scribere Evangelica*; but he adds, *sed non omnes recepti*. There was, then, in the first and second centuries, a great work of editing, co-ordinating, and eliminating, which resulted in an evangelical canon. At the time of Tertullian (beginning of the third century) the canon was fixed; for he speaks (*Ad Marcionem*, iv. 2) of the four Gospels “of the apostles Matthew and John” and the “apostolic men” Luke and Mark, as forming the “evangelical instrument” accepted in his time. So also Saint Irenaeus, who was put to death under Severus (*Adv. haer.* iii. 11), and Clement of Alexandria, who died under Caracalla or Elagabalus (*Strom.* iii. 13); but both quote freely from the Apocrypha; Origen thinks “it may be used with discretion” (*Hom. 26 in Matth.* 23). The author of the *Letters* of Saint Ignatius regards the Gospel of the Hebrews as an authentic text (*Ad Smyrn.* 3); Saint Irenaeus mentions also the Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. Saint Justin, half a century earlier, never cites the Epistles, and very rarely the Fourth Gospel, the authenticity of which was still under discussion. Even in the middle of the third century, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, does not know who is the author of the Apocalypse, and is not without some distrust of the value of this book (Eusebius, *Hist. eccles.* vii. 25). “Peter,” says Origen (*ap. Eusebius, ibid.* vi. 25), “has left but one epistle which is generally received. . . . John has also left one very short

its holy book, the New Testament,—less poetical than the Old, but far superior as a winner of souls.

Finally, Theophilus of Antioch had just found a word which is not in the Gospels, the word Trinity,¹—a brief and clear expression of the dogma which the Council of Nicaea stated exactly, by determining the relations of the three divine persons;² and Saint Irenaeus wrote, between the years 177 and 192, the



NATIVITY OF CHRIST.³

Catholic profession of faith in almost the same terms used in the doctrinal formulary of 325.⁴ But all Christian believers did not attach the same importance to these obscure dogmas. In the fourth century, Lactantius, one of the most valiant defenders of the Church, understood them so imperfectly that Pope Gelasius placed his works among the apocrypha; later still, Gregory Nazianzen will show what uncertainty existed with regard to the Holy Spirit.⁵

Thus, at the epoch where we take up the history of the Church, the close of the second century, Christian theology had

Epistle. . . . As to the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, my belief is that God alone knows who is its author." The authenticity of the Pauline Epistles to Titus and Timothy is also much contested.

¹ *Tpías* (*Ad Autolyc.* ii. 15), which Tertullian translated by the Latin word *Trinitas* (*De Pudicitia*, 21).

² In respect to this old trinitarian belief, which underlies the Gospels, particularly that of Saint John, see Vol. VI. p. 585, note. Theophilus was bishop of Antioch, and died in the reign of Commodus.

³ From a marble in the Museum of the Lateran (Roller, *Les Catac. de Rome*, pl. lxvii. No. 2).

⁴ *Adv. haer.* i. 10; likewise Tertullian in the *De Praescr.* 13, and, less at length, in the *De Velandis Virg.*

⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.* xxxi. *Spiritus sancti negat substantiam*, says Saint Jerome (*Epist.* 49), with reference to Lactantius; and he adds that Laetantius displays more skill in combating error than in establishing truth (*Epist.* 13, *ad Paulin.*).

made a brilliant beginning. It was Greek genius which had done this, by the mouth of Ignatius and Irenaeus, of Justin and Athenagoras, of Tatian and Theophilus, of Melito of Sardis and Apollinarius of Hierapolis; and other Greeks, Clement and Origen, will develop it in the third, in the great school of Alexandria.¹

The fraternal agape had at first been only a remembrance of the Last Supper and a transformation of the great feast of the Jews, the Passover, at which the paschal lamb was eaten in commemoration of the miraculous exodus of the Hebrews when they



THE AGAPE.²

escaped from the bondage of Egypt. The increasing number of believers changed its character; it became the mystic repast, which derived its name, *εὐχαριστία*, from the thanksgiving pronounced in the benediction of the cup and the breaking of the bread.³ For the bloody sacrifice of the old cult, Christianity substituted one of a nature wholly spiritual, like itself, and also celebrating a deliverance, — that of souls.

Sacrifice — that is to say, the gift offered to the gods with the view of gaining their favor — had been the basis of all the cults; and the costlier the offering, the more efficacious was believed to be the sacrifice. Hence the immolation of human victims. Time made this cruel piety unpopular, the philosophers condemned it, and the Emperors prohibited it; but the belief in the merits of sacrifice

¹ Τὸ κατ' Ἀλεξάνδρειαν διδασκαλεῖον (Eusebius, *ibid.* v. 10).

² From a bas-relief of the Kircher Museum (Roller, pl. liv. fig. 7).

³ On the *eucharistia* in the middle of the second century, see Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* iv. 18) and Saint Justin (*Apol.* i. 65–67).

did not cease; it became transformed and purified. The pagan god received the offering and shared it with his worshippers;¹ the new God gave himself to his priests and his followers. No more shedding of blood, no more flame consuming the victim, no more smoke veiling the divine face. The gifts of the heavenly Father which sustain life upon the earth,—bread, water, and wine,—became symbols of men's communion with him. His spirit was incarnate in Jesus; Jesus ascended to heaven, became incarnate in the bread and wine consecrated on earth: *hoc est corpus meum, hic est sanguis meus*. This was at first only a figure.² As men participated in idolatry by eating the flesh of pagan victims, they participated in the new cult by breaking the bread and drinking the cup. But the condition of men's minds being what it was, the figure must very soon become to the faithful a reality. In the middle of the second century the eucharist was already "the sacrament of the altar."³ While Christian believers were still far from believing in transubstantiation, they already admitted consubstantiation; and the mystic sanctity which the Lord's Supper had acquired, communicated to the priest who offered the sacrifice a more exalted dignity, with the character of a necessary mediator between heaven and earth.

This character was also to come to him in another way.

Jesus had left to his Apostles only the two commands: "Preach the Gospel to all the nations, and baptize them." This baptism, which he himself had chosen to receive, was a symbol of purification and the condition of salvation.⁴ In early times it presupposed on the part of the one who presented himself for it a personal adherence given after receiving instruction, and signified by a profession of the Christian faith. Hence it was administered to adults only: the catechumens of Alexandria waited three years for it.⁵ But the sacramental idea attached especial virtues to it; by it, he who was baptized was born again in the spirit. "Plunged in the darkness of a dense night, and floating on the

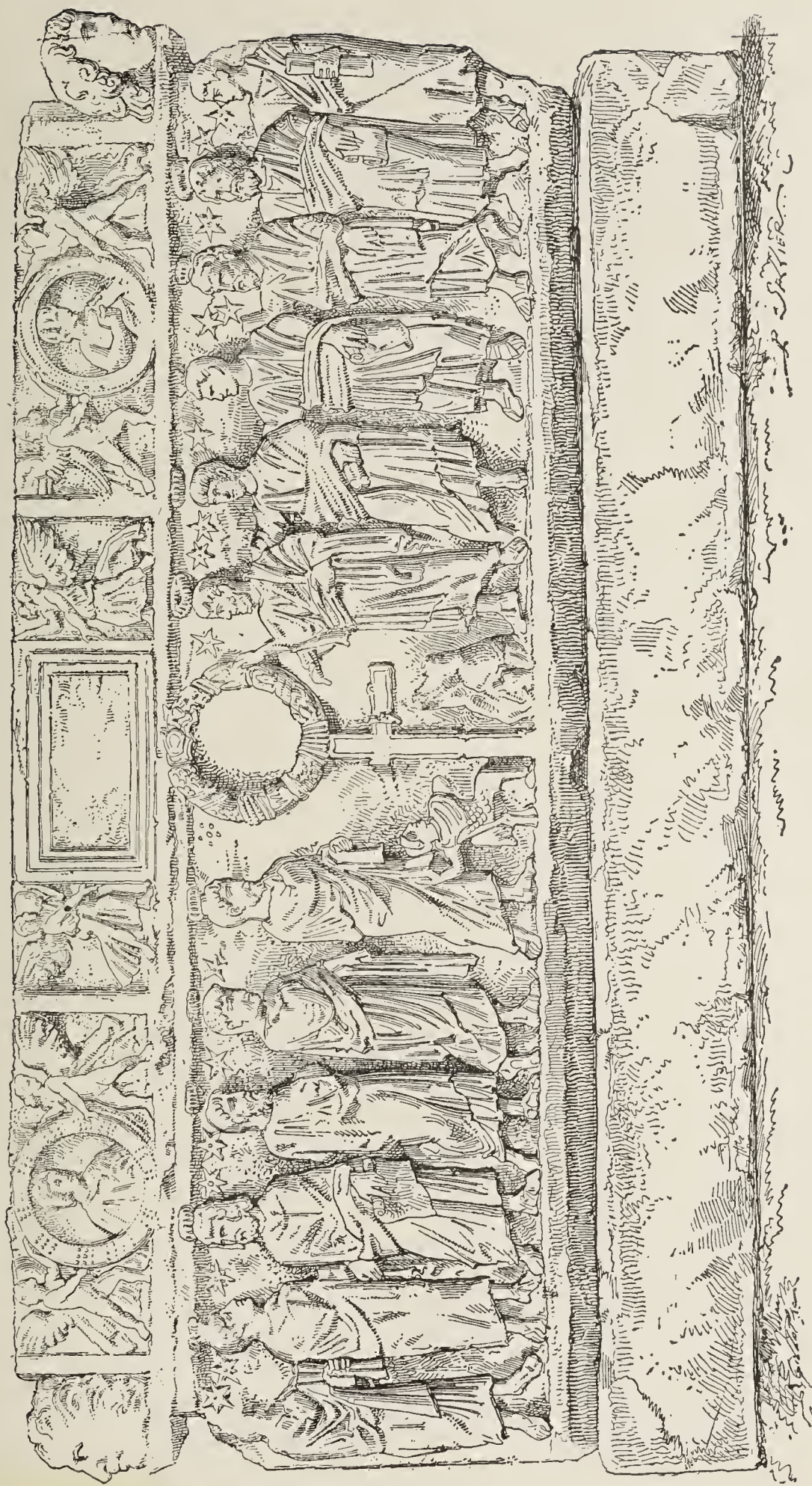
¹ In ancient Italy the repast was always preceded by libations to the Penates.

² The Acts of the Apostles (ii. 42, and xx. 7) explain the words of Paul, 1 Cor. x. 16.

³ Ignatius, *Ad Rom.* 7; *Ad Smyrn.* 7; Justin. *Apol.* i. 66; and Irenaeus, *op. cit.* iv. 18, and v. 2.

⁴ John, iii. 5.

⁵ *Κανόνες τῆς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐκκλησίας* (ii. 45, *ap.* Bunsen, iv. 451 *et seq.*).



THE APOSTLES. (BAS-RELIEF OF A SARCOPHAGUS OF ARLES. E. LE BLANT, ÉTUDES SUR LES SARCOPHAGES DE LA
VILLE D'ARLES, PLATE XIV.)

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stormy sea of the time, I drifted hither and thither," says Saint Cyprian, "and knew not how to direct my life. Divine goodness caused me to be born again in the saving water of baptism. . . . At once a serene and pure light was shed from on high upon my soul, and I became a new man."¹ This efficacy of baptism dispensing with personal adherence, children were admitted to regeneration. This was a noteworthy innovation. The Master had said, *Sinite venire ad me parvulos*; the Church called them and took them. She now watched over the beginnings of life, as over the approach of death, and thus she was enabled to keep or to recover in the turbulent years of youth those whom from their birth she had "enrolled in the army of Christ (*census Dei*)."³

BAPTISM.²

Emerging from the baptismal font, the neophyte was clothed with a white robe, — symbol of innocence, — and he drank, from a vessel of milk and honey, the pure, sweet nourishment of the body, which was an image of the spiritual food distributed by the Church to all her children.⁴

Jesus had said, "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them." This was a powerful means of action for the

¹ Saint Cyprian, *Ep. ad Donat.* Saint Justin (*Apol.* i. 61) had spoken of this new birth by baptism, and Origen called it "the principle and the source of the gifts of grace" (*In Joann.* 17).

² From a painting in the crypt of Pope Calixtus (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. xxiv. fig. 4. Cf. *ibid.* i. 131).

³ Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, 17. Baptism was habitually administered by immersion for those in health, by sprinkling for the sick. This rite was also the foundation of the worship of Mithra, then widely extended, and it "regenerated for eternity" him who received it; but it was a baptism of blood, giving rise to a hideous ceremony (Vol. VI. p. 390), which must have repelled women, children, and all sensitive persons. Another baptism of blood, that of the Jews, continued for some time to be practised by the Christian Jews also. The fifteen bishops of Jerusalem, down to the destruction of the temple, were circumcised (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* iv. 5).

⁴ . . . *Mellis et lactis societatem* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marcion.* i. 14)

government of souls, promised to the new priesthood. At first, the penitent "made unto the Lord"¹ the avowal of his fault in the presence of the believers, and the priest determined the necessary expiation. But it was inevitable that auricular confession should take the place of public confession. The penitent and the priest were equally interested in this change, for the public confession being possible only in the case of grave offences, the minor ones escaped the action of the Church. With confession to the priest alone, the sinner, especially women,² avoided the shame of humiliation before all the people; and the priest penetrated into the private life of the penitent, and was thus better enabled to direct him for salvation. If the penitent, in a dying condition, desired to be reconciled to the Church, the priest, at his bedside, necessarily represented the whole assembly of the brethren; and the exception ended by becoming the rule. However, public confession was not interdicted until the middle of the fifth century; but at that time auricular confession, whose beginnings we see in the epoch now under consideration,³ had long since acquired the power of a sacrament. By the counsels which follow confession, the priest assumed the direction of the life of the penitents: he taught them the laws of right conduct according to the Church, and by his power to bind and to loose, made saints destined to sit down at the right hand of God, or damned souls whom Satan and his tortures await. The pagan mysteries, too, granted salvation, but by an initiation which was not repeated. In the bosom of the Church the initiation is perpetually renewed by the eucharistic communion, which restores to a state of purity, by the religious teaching which prepares for it, by the sacrament of penitence which brings back the sinner or turns away forever the excommunicated, banished at the same time from the Church and from heaven. What a moral power in this

¹ . . . *Exomologesis est qua delictum domino nostro confitemur* (Tertullian, *De Poenit.* 9). It is the public confession mentioned in the Gospel of Saint Matthew (iii. 6), of Saint Mark (i. 5), and in the Acts (xix. 18).

² Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* i. 3) speaks of women who publicly confessed their faults.

³ Origen, in the second homily upon Psalm xxxvii. 19, in the *Homilia 2 in Levit.* 4, and in his *De Orat.* 28, is already more explicit. At this moment, the middle of the third century, the two modes of confession co-exist, but the confession to the priest is already more customary than the confession to the assembly. Cf. the *Octavius*, 9, 10, 11, 12, 25, 26, and 29, and the *De Lapsis*. As to the laying on of hands, that was a Jewish custom.

faith! What supremacy given to these outcasts of earth who were able to give heaven or refuse it! Never before had such authority been recognized by men, such discipline accepted by believers; and how clearly this explains why the nations so long bent their knees and subjected their souls to the priesthood of the Church!

Another sacrament now came into existence, or rather an ancient usage continued under a new form,—extreme unction.¹ This again



THE AGAPE, SYMBOL OF THE EUCHARISTIC COMMUNION.²

is only the prayer of the priests over the sick, the Jewish usage of anointing with oil in the name of the Lord, and the confession of faith by dying persons.³

The civil law does not favor celibacy, for celibacy renders a man free from the obligations of the family, and the family is the basis of society. But in the East, and even in Greece, certain churches and philosophic sects recommended it. In the days of the old religion, some of the goddesses—Diana, Minerva, Vesta, and the Muses—had repudiated even chaste love; and at Athens and Rome, and among the Gauls, the holiest prayers were those

¹ Origen, *Homilia 2 in Levit.* 2.

² After a marble of the Lateran. The Genius which occupies the left is foreign to the eucharistic supper. He supports the frame of the epitaph (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. liv. fig. 6).

³ James v. 14-15. Among the Jews perfumed olive-oil served for various religious uses (Genesis xxviii. 18, and Exodus xxx. 24-29) and for the anointing of high-priests and kings, for the treatment of diseases and wounds (Isaiah i. 6), for the purification of lepers (Levit. xiv. 17).

of virgins. The Apostles and the early Fathers did not impose celibacy; there was, however, a tendency towards it; it was the



THE VIRGIN.¹

natural consequence of a doctrine which prescribed the mortification of the flesh, and renunciation.² As early as the period of

¹ From a fresco of the subterranean basilica of St. Clement at Rome. This Virgin, doubtless of the eighth century, is the oldest known after that of the catacombs of St. Priscilla. The basilica of St. Clement, between the Caelian and the Esquiline, was filled up in the twelfth century for the construction of the present church, and has been rendered accessible only since 1855. The Madonna buried there has consequently suffered no retouching; and with her nimbus of gold and her rich drapery overloaded with gems, offers us an authentic specimen of the Byzantine style (Roller, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pl. C, and p. 354).

² We find in the early centuries numbers of bishops married, but living in celibacy. Caecilius, a presbyter of the church of Carthage, at his death commended his wife and children to Saint Cyprian's care (Fleury. *Hist. ecclés.* ii. 173), and during the persecution of Decius, the Bishop of Nieopolis in Egypt fled to the desert "with his wife" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccles.* vi. 42). Records of martyrs relating to the persecution of Diocletian speak of married bishops, and a law of 357 (*Cod. Theod.* xvi. 2, 14), confirming the benefits granted by Constantine to the clergy, extended them to their wives and children, *mares et feminae*. The Church recommended continence to the married clergy (Council of Elvira, 33d canon; Council of Nicaea, 3d canon). See in Socrates (*Hist. eccles.* i. 11) the speech of Saint Paphnutius in opposition at the Council of Nicaea. The same writer mentions (v. 22) at the end of the fourth century married bishops who had had legitimate children after their ordination.

which we speak, the Christian Church refused to admit to the episcopate those who had contracted a second marriage; and this regulation has been preserved in the Greek Church. In order to control man at every moment of his life, from the cradle to the grave, the Church later made a sacrament of marriage, although without being able to deprive it of its fundamental character of a civil contract.¹

The Virgin, who occupies so high a place in the Roman Catholic Church of modern times, was comparatively an insignificant figure in the early ages. Mention is made of her with respect, but no worship is rendered to her. With the lapse of time the historic person became a sacred type. This was not, however, until the second Oecumenical Council, that of 381, which placed her name in the creed, to which the Fathers of Nicaea had not admitted it.

The dogma of the communion and intercession of saints will also not be formulated until the fourth century. "At the altar," Saint Augustine says, "we do not speak of the martyrs as we do of the faithful who rest in peace. We do not pray for them; we entreat them to pray for us."² As early as the third century, however, there is a trace of this,³ and it was also a necessary consequence.

Thus was formed the grand epic of the Christian religion, as the song of some old klepht became, by the labor of successive generations, the *Iliad* of Homer; and it was destined to be, for a long succession of centuries, the consolation and the delight of souls. But the new poet who developed the primitive germ was the Church, or rather those ardent communities, those nocturnal

¹ Jesus had said (Matt. xxii. 30): "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage," and Saint Paul accepted mixed unions (1 Cor. vii. 12-26), — a doctrine which a council again sanctioned in 314. Saint Paul (Ephes. v. 32) calls marriage *μυστήριον*, — a word which has been too freely translated "sacrament." Among the Romans marriage was a civil contract, indispensable for the constitution of the family and the reciprocal rights of the parties and of their children, and the Church could not herself change its conditions; but she joined to it her prayers and her benediction. The Council of Trent (sess. xxiv.) recognized that in marriage the sacrament had the effect of sanctifying the pre-existing contract: *gratiam quae naturalem illum amorem perficeret . . . conjugesque sanctificaret.*

² *Commemoramus . . . ut etiam pro eis oremus, sed magis ut et ipsi pro nobis* (Tract. 84 in *Evang. S. Joann.*).

³ Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 57, *ad finem*. The doctrine of purgatory, unknown to the Evangelists (St. Luke xvi. 26), was also propounded by Saint Augustine.

assemblies, whose religious wants increased with the contagion of faith. The ignorant led on the learned; and they, drawing freely from the triple treasure of Biblical poetry, Grecian philosophy, and the Gospel, multiplied the dogmas, made the forms of worship more splendid, and changed all, thinking that they had changed nothing.

The ceremonies varied, for the liturgy, or rule of public worship, had not its present unity, each church being at liberty to prepare its own.¹ Saint Clement, in the century preceding, spoke of this in his *Epistle to the Corinthians*. This bishop of the mistress city of the world, this *Romanus*, as he is called, had also previously invoked discipline by comparing the Church to the legions of Caesar, in which the chief commands.² His successors finally introduced into the Church the same rules of absolute obedience; and the fruitful liberty of the religious life of the early ages, without which nothing could be founded, was destined to disappear, giving place to that discipline without which nothing endures.

At the end of the second century the dogmatic work of the Church was so far advanced that Clement of Alexandria, writing in the reign of Severus, sought to co-ordinate its parts into a scientific system constructed with the ordinary processes of human thought. "Faith," he said, "is the science of divine things given by revelation; but this science must furnish the demonstration of the things of faith." And he composed the *Stromata*, which, though not written with the severe method of Saint Thomas, are nevertheless a first essay of Christian philosophy. Now, it is a sign of power, and often of approaching victory for ideas, when philosophy takes them up and formulates them.

¹ See in the third volume of the *Analecta Ante-Nicaeana* of Bunsen, the fragments of the most ancient liturgies. The first which he quotes (p. 21) was used at Alexandria in the time of Origen; and Bunsen does not think that it can be dated earlier than the middle of the second century.

² Κατανοήσωμεν τοὺς στρατευομένους τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ἡμῶν εὐτάκτως πῶς εἰκοντάς (Saint Clement, *Ad Corinth.* 37).

I.—THE HIERARCHY AND DISCIPLINE.

WHILE the Church was thus regulating its internal life, it had been led, by the very nature of its efforts to propagate the faith, to adopt for its external life an organization which the strongest political conceptions have never equalled.

The Christian communities of the earliest days had as few ecclesiastical laws as they had sacraments; each organizing itself after its own will. In the time of Saint Paul numbers of brethren were allowed to assume an office or a title, in order to retain them, by the gratification of a very human sentiment,—the wish to have a certain recognized superiority. We know how fond the fraternities, the cities, and the whole Roman world were of this hierarchal order.¹ “God,” says Saint Paul, “hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues.”² This strange confusion could not last. The Greek cities had *ἐπίσκοποι*, or overseers,—a kind of aediles, whose duties the *Digest*³ defines: “those who have charge of the provisions.” The first Christian communities seem to have borrowed this municipal function and its name.⁵ At their head, to preside

THE APOSTLES SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL.⁴

¹ See Vol. V. chap. lxxx. “The City.” ² 1 Cor. xii. 28. ³ l. 4, 18, sec. 7.

⁴ From a gilded glass of the catacombs, fourth century (Roller, pl. lxxix. No. 5).

⁵ This is the opinion of several theologians, and it is probably correct. Cf. Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, p. 474. We even find *ἐπίσκοποι* in the Greek fraternities (see Wescher, *Revue archéol.*, April, 1866). The episcopal cross is similar to the *lituus* of the Roman augur. Has it been borrowed from it, or does it come from the shepherd’s crook? From both, doubtless, but rather from the latter.

over their meetings, they placed the one most venerable by age or sanctity, the elder, the *πρεσβύτερος*. Gradually the overseer, who had the principal active duties, rose above the elder, who possessed only the dignity; or rather the two functions were united, in some places from the very first, and elsewhere later. Saint Paul had overseers or elders, and deacons elected in all the churches which he instituted. At the end of the first century Saint Clement,¹ in the middle of the second, Saint Polycarp² and Saint Justin,³ as yet knew only these two orders; but the number of the believers increasing, that of the ministers of the religion augmented, and differences became marked. On the other hand, to the heresies which were multiplying it was necessary to oppose discipline; that is to say, a concentration of authority. In the time of Severus, the important Christian fraternities had a bishop representing the unity of spiritual government, priests for the religious offices, deacons for the service of the temple,—altogether forming the clergy or “the side of the Lord.”

These offices were elective. The elders chose the *episcopus*, and presented him to the brethren, who then confirmed him in his office by acclamation. They also confirmed, by the raising of hands, the appointment of priests and deacons made by the bishop. Thus we see that, though the consent of the community was necessary, the real choice depended on the chief persons. In this way order, indispensable to regular life, replaced the disorder of the early times. The same necessities which had educed from the multitude of evangelical writings the canon of the Scriptures,—that is to say, the rule of faith,—had insensibly led to the establishment in each Christian community of the hierarchy,—that is to say, the administration,—as later they led to the formation of the general government of the Church. It was in the logic of facts, and we cannot see how it could have been otherwise. Without this discipline there would have been no Catholic Church.

¹ Acts xx. 17-28; 1 Tim. iii. 2-8; Titus, i. 5-7; Saint Clement, *Ad Cor.* 42; Polycarp, *Ad Philipp.* 5; Saint Jerome, *Comment. in Titum: Idem est presbyter qui et episcopus* . . .

² *Ad Cor.* 42.

³ *Ep. ad Philipp.* 5, 6. In the *Pastor* of Hermas there is also no trace of an episcopate. Mention is indeed found, in the letters of Saint Ignatius, of bishops, priests, and deacons; but the different texts of these documents give rise to too many discussions to admit of producing them as unobjectionable testimony.

As tradition plays an important part in the Church, the old bishops were supposed to transmit it to the new; hence the consecration of the bishop-elect by a bishop of the vicinity, and the gradual formation of ecclesiastical provinces. "The bishop," says the fourth canon of the Council of Nicaea, "should be ordained by three bishops."

One of the oldest rights of Rome, and, we may say, one of the dearest to the Roman people,—the liberty of forming fraternities and societies,—favored the first organization of the churches.¹ By taking the form of burial associations, the Christians were enabled to organize, under the protection of the law, in corporations having the character of a civil person; that is to say, with the right to receive legacies or donations, and the monthly contributions of their members. The Mosaic law had secured to the Levites the tenth of all the products of the earth. Roman usage gave a new force to the Hebrew custom; and as the synagogues of the whole Empire formerly sent their gifts each year to the temple of Jerusalem, the believers made their offering to the church every month. Many—Saint Cyprian, for instance—sold their property and gave the price of it to the bishop. The incumbent of the Roman see received from a single person two hundred thousand sesterces, and the Bishop of Carthage was able to employ half as much money for the ransom of Christian captives carried away by the Moors.²

A BISHOP.³

Each church had, therefore, a revenue which enabled it to aid the poor and the afflicted, to meet the

¹ The right of association was, according to the testimony of Gaius (*Digest*, xlviii. 22. 4) formally recognized by the Twelve Tables. *Collegiis*, it said, *potestatem facit lex* (XII. Tab.) *pactionem quam velint sibi ferre dum ne quid ex publica lege corrumpant*. (See Vol. VI. pp. 94 et seq.) The Romans had so great a liking for these associations that they formed them even in the camps, in spite of an express inhibition by Severus.

² Tertullian, *De Praescr.*, 30; Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 60. His letter, No. 65, and that of Pope Cornelius *ad Fab.*, show that the *arca* of the churches began to have considerable resources. Even at this time some of the bishops misused them. Cf. Saint Cyprian, *De Lapsis*.

³ Martigny, *Dict. des Ant. chrét.*

expenses of public worship and of the repasts in common, the *agapae*, at which the priests, like the officers of the pagan societies, received for their maintenance a double portion;¹ even to

THE AGAPE.²

acquire land whereon to establish a common cemetery, in which nocturnal assemblies were held.³

The catacombs of Calixtus, in which so many popes were interred, were already in existence at Rome along the Appian Way, and Alexander Severus adjudged to the Christians an estate which

¹ On the *duplicares*, see Vol. VI. p. 102. Saint Paul had recommended this custom (1 Tim. v. 17, 18), and Tertullian (*De Jejun.* 17) recalls it: *Duplex honor binis partibus praesidentibus deputabatur*. The confessors were often honored with a sacerdotal gift (Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 34). The *agape* and the supper, at first united, *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον* (1 Cor. xi. 20), were separated at an early date. At the end of the fourth century Saint Monica still brought to the church bread and wine, after the African custom. Saint Ambrose forbade her doing it.

² From a painting at the close of the third century or beginning of the fourth, in the cemetery of Peter and Marcellinus on the *Via Labicana* (Th. Roller, *op. cit.* pl. liii. fig. 1).

³ Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, 40. In some cases slaves claimed that with these funds they might purchase their freedom. *Μὴ ἐράνωσαν ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ ἐλευθεροῦσθαι* (Saint Ignatius, *Ad Polyc.* 2). On the Christian cemeteries of Rome, see the fine work of the Chevalier de Rossi, *Roma sotterranea*.

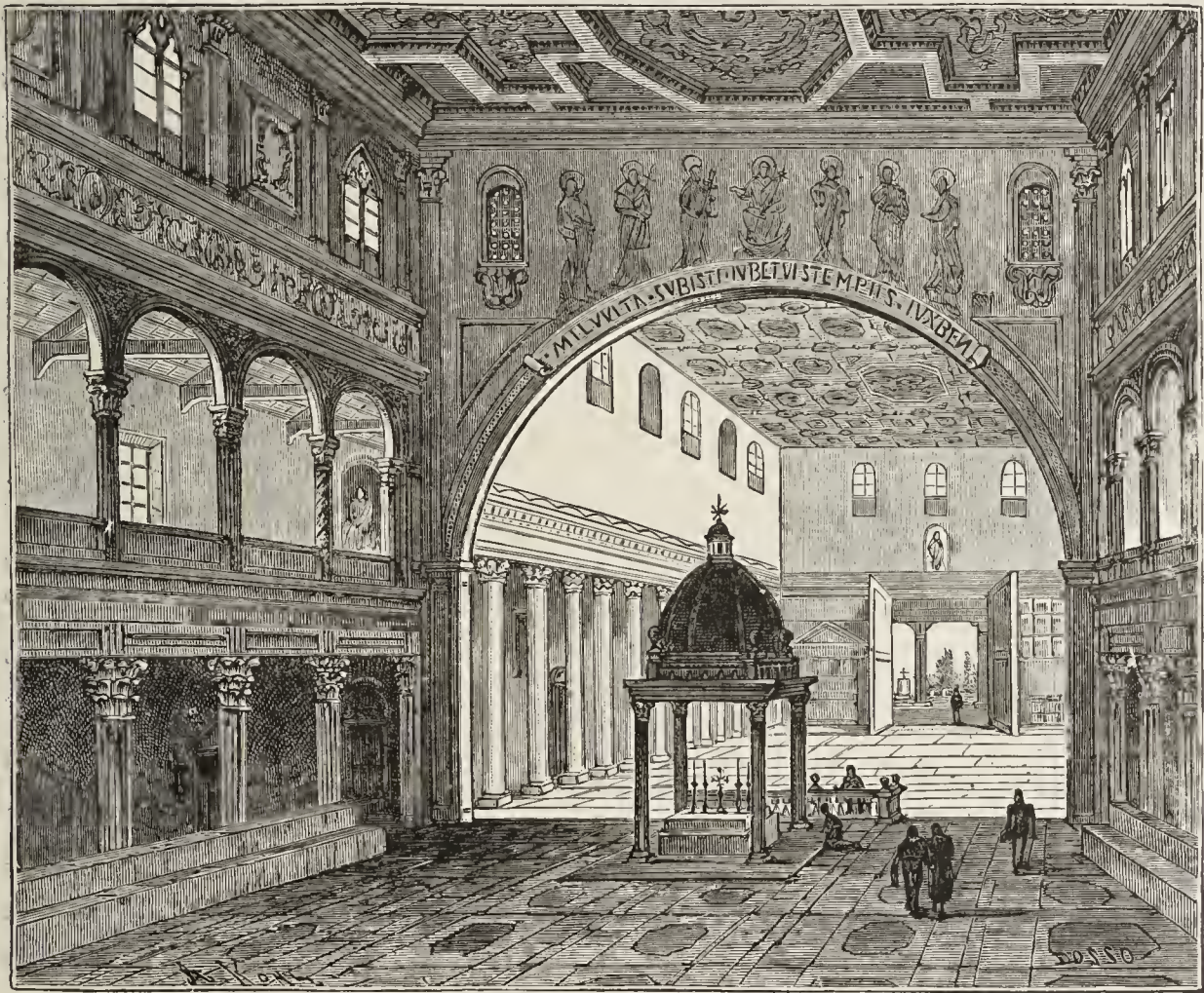


CRYPT OF POPE SAINT CORNELIVS IN THE CATACOMBS OF CALIXTUS: SECOND CENTURY
(ROLLER, LES CATACOMBS DE ROME., PLATE XXX. 1).

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the pagans had contested with them. Ecclesiastical property began, therefore, at this time to be constituted, as had been that of the pagan temples, by donations. For the moment, it was still very small; but it was one day to become very large.

At a later period the Church will again employ the convenient mould of the imperial administration, and will be able to fill it.



BASILICA OF S. LORENZO FUORI LE MURA.

The *civitas* with its vast territory will form the diocese, and the civil will become the religious metropolis; the archbishop will succeed to the flamen who brought to the altar of Rome and Augustus the prayers and votive offerings of the entire province; finally, the basilica will serve as a church, and even to this day we preserve in thousands of places the Roman usage of keeping the women separate from the men.¹

The societies so numerous in the provinces had preserved the

¹ In the upper galleries of the basilicas the men were on one side, the women on the other (Pliny, *Epist.* vi. 33).

Graeco-Roman idea of popular power, which the Empire had abandoned in fact if not in law; in these colleges all measures were put to vote. The Church followed this usage, which was a matter of apostolic tradition,¹ and the popular election was termed the voice of God (*vox Dei*).² Alexander Severus was so struck by the advantages of this system that he for a moment thought of establishing it for the imperial administration.³ In the civil order, the election ended all, — at least unless the law recognized the right of the Emperor to approve or to reject; in the Church, another act intervened, — the laying-on of hands, which transmitted spiritual powers to the person elected.⁴ This rite, indispensable in order that the election should have its religious effect, must have from the beginning reduced the vote of the laity to a simple assent given by them to the choice which the elders had made.

Another essential difference was this: the elections in the civil society were annual; those of the Church conferred, by the episcopal consecration, a permanent character and a life-office. Thus this democratic society gave itself an aristocracy which changed its members very slowly. The conservative element was placed above the varying element, and the Church enjoyed the chief advantage of hereditary governments, duration, without experiencing its inconveniences: a great bishop might be succeeded by another still greater. But this aristocracy did not exercise a power without control. As the *duumvir* was in a certain measure dependent on the *curia*, the bishop likewise administered with the council of the priests,⁵

¹ When the Apostles founded the first ecclesiastical office, the diaconate, Saint Peter said to those present (Acts vi. 3): "Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men . . ." See, in vol. viii. of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* of Fleury, the *Discours sur l'histoire des six premiers siècles de l'Église*, sees. v. and vi.

² Συνευδοκησάσης ἐκκλησίας πάσης (Saint Clement, *Ad Cor.* 44). Ψήφω τοῦ λαοῦ παντός (Saint Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.* 24). See the election of Fabian at Rome, under Gordian (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 29), and that of Cyprian at Carthage. Yet at the end of the second century the election was modified and the powers of the bishop were extended. When the priest Novatus appointed a deacon, Saint Cyprian, his bishop, accused him of usurpation (*Ep.* 52). As in the pagan clergy, certain corporeal defects excluded from the priesthood. See in Soerates (*Hist. eccl.* iv. 23) the story of the monk Ammon, who cuts off one ear to escape the episcopate.

³ Lamp., *Alex. Sev.* 49.

⁴ Acts xiv. 23: χειροτονήσαντές τε αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους, and *ibid.* vi. 6; viii. 17; ix. 17. The imposition of hands was an old Jewish usage.

⁵ . . . *Et antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent . . . communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesiae gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat*

and they assisted him in deciding the questions submitted to him by the laity.¹

All associations which are formed outside of public duties and in opposition to them are compelled to constitute themselves judges of their own members. The Christian community, who designated the officers of the churches and received the confession of the penitent, also made saints, without the formalities required for canonization in succeeding centuries. The veneration with which the multitude of believers regarded the tombs where the remains of the Christian heroes reposed, sufficed later to give admission to the register of martyrs.²

Among the primitive churches there was an interchange of counsels, and sometimes "a mutual and salutary admonition."³ Had they gone no farther, there would have been only a multitude of Christian communities, but they never would have made a church, any more than a group of independent republics constitutes a state. With, however, the dogma of a revealed law and of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, transmitted "by the laying on of hands," it was a necessary consequence that the Apostles should be considered as having communicated to their successors "the certain grace of the truth." The latter were accordingly held to be the depositaries of the oral tradition, which made it possible to explain and extend the written tradition; that is to say, to preserve within the Church a principle of development, like those constitutions of our time which declare themselves subject to revision, or those governments in which legislative action is continually modifying the ancient

suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur ceteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiae cura pertineret et schismatum semina tollerentur (Saint Jerome, *Ad Tit.* c. 1, p. 694, ed. of 1737, and *Ep.* 85, or 101 in the edition of the Benedictines, vol. iv. p. 803). He there describes the ancient state of the Church at Alexandria: . . . *Alexandriae, a Marco evangelista usque ad Heraclem et Dionysium episcopos, presbyteri semper unum ex se electum in excelsiori gradu collocatum episcopum nominabant, quomodo si exercitus imperatorem faciat.* These words are confirmed by the patriarch Eutychius, *Ann.* i. 330.

¹ *Constitut. Apost.* ii. 46.

² The absence of this canonization is one of the arguments employed by Pope Benedict XIV. (*Euvres*, vi. 119-125) in refusing to Clement of Alexandria the title of saint.

³ These are the words of Saint Clement (*Ad Cor.* 56): *Ἡ νοουθέτησις δὲ ποιούμεθα εἰς ἀλλήλους καλὴ ἐστίν.* These letters touch upon all kinds of subjects, and were often written in the name of the entire community, without the intervention of an elder or a bishop; as for instance, the beautiful letter of the Christians of Lyons to their brethren in Asia Minor. (See Vol. V. p. 501.)

order in accordance with new requirements. What our statesmen call "reason," the Church calls "the Holy Spirit;" it is the same thing, with this difference,—that the one counsels, and the other commands.

. All the bishops had at this time equal authority,¹ and they were very numerous, because every community desired to have its own. This equal authority would only have been a cause of division, had not the necessity of concerted action and mutual understanding led to the borrowing of still another institution from the Roman commonwealth. As the representatives of the cities were accustomed to assemble in the capital of the province, so the representatives of the Christian communities met together at the most important see in the region; and these provincial assemblies, of which the Empire had not known how to take advantage,² made the fortune of the Church. When any difficulty arose, the bishops consulted; and after discussion, decided by a majority of the votes what should be believed and what should be done. Was it not written in the Gospel: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"? What was this but to say that the decisions of the councils were inspired by the Holy Spirit?³ The priests and deacons who sat with the bishops,⁴ gave to these assemblies a democratic character,—which is a great advantage for those who deliberate upon the interests of a newly formed society.

This institution, destined to play a very important part, appeared towards the close of the second century. The record has been preserved of only two assemblies of this sort before the time

¹ Saint Cyprian, writing to Pope Stephen on the subject of the bishops of Gallia Narbonensis, says: *Coepiscopi nostri* (*Ep.* 67); and in his letter No. 72 we read: . . . *Non legem damus, quamvis habeat in Ecclesiae administratione voluntatis suae arbitrium liberum unusquisque praepositus rationem actus sui Domino redditurus*. See also the words used by Saint Cyprian when inviting the Fathers of the Third Council of Carthage to vote with absolute freedom, since no one of them thinks of being an *episcopus episcoporum*, or is inclined to impose his will on his colleagues,—words which certainly were an allusion to the pretensions of Stephen.

² See Vol. IV. pp. 187, *et seq.*, and 372; and Vol. VI. p. 167.

³ See p. 9. Saint Cyprian writes to Pope Cornelius (*Ep.* 54) on the subject of the Council of 252: . . . *Placuit nobis, sancto Spiritu suggerente*. Constantine will call the decisions of the Synod of Arles, *caeleste iudicium*, and will add: *Sacerdotum iudicium ita debet haberi ac si ipse Dominus residens iudicet* (Hardouin, *Collect. concil.* i. 268). Gregory the Great declared the authority of the first four Oecumenical Councils equal to that of the four Gospels.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vii. 30.

of Severus, and of two others during his reign. — if we do not count those of the year 196. which were held at Rome, in Palestine, in Pontus, at Corinth, in Mesopotamia, and elsewhere,¹ to fix the date of Easter, which determined the time of many Christian festivals and of certain religious obligations. In the following generation Saint Cyprian convoked sixty African bishops to decide upon measures to be taken against the *lapsi*. and eighty-seven to determine the question of the baptism of heretics.² This new and superior jurisdiction diminished the liberty of the individual churches. but was the only means of making a general Church. In the fourth century the Church will advance farther on this road towards unity of faith and discipline. instituting the Oecumenical Councils, which will decide among the provincial councils. as the latter had decided among individual Christian communities.³

Thus the Church had naturally. by the conditions of its historical development. acquired a constitution superior to that of pagan society. and it had found the chief elements of this constitution in the remnant of liberties which the Empire had left in the midst of the towns and provinces. The Church was a representative democracy. having great vitality through the participation of the people in affairs of common interest, and, through its councils. great power of cohesion. The authority of the episcopate. which increased in spite of cases of local resistance,⁴ will soon augment this union.

Certain sees, — those of Alexandria. of Antioch, and of Rome, — enjoyed a special consideration. due to the importance of the cities where they were established, and to the belief that, having been founded by the Apostles. a purer form of tradition had been preserved in them. Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History* gives

¹ See *L'Art de écrire les dates*. and Hefele. *Concilienngeschichte*, i. 69 *et seq.* It is doubtless to these synods that Tertullian alludes (*De Jejuniis*, 13). I do not, of course, mention what is called the Council of Jerusalem. between the years 50 and 52. The Council of the Province of Asia. which included a great number of bishops. differed on this point from the opinion of Rome. and this division lasted for centuries (Fleury. *Hist. eccl.* i. 518).

² These eighty-seven bishops belonged to proconsular Africa. Numidia, and Mauretania. This council appears to be of the year 256.

³ The term "oecumenical council" signifies an assemblage of the bishops of the whole habitable earth; but for a long while the limits of the organized Church were the frontiers of the Empire.

⁴ This resistance to the absorption of the Church by the bishop was doubtless the real cause of the struggles of Felicesimus against Cyprian, and of Hippolytus against Calixtus.

to them, in the fourth century, a special dignity, which the Council of Nicaea confirmed. Although as yet there had not gone forth from the Roman Church either an illustrious theologian or any of those great words which provoke or terminate fiery disputes,¹ men must naturally have been led to recognize a primacy of honor in the bishop of the capital of the world. in the see, the only one in all the West, which was regarded as of apostolic origin, which was said to have been consecrated by the blood of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and in which their tombs were to be seen. Saint Ignatius of Antioch, under Trajan, in his letter to the Christians of Rome, makes no allusion to the special power of their bishop. From their prisons the confessors of Lyons write to him, it is true, recommending the union of the churches; but they address the same recommendation to their brethren of Asia, — words of peace, which on the eve of suffering, the martyrs often sent to other Christian assemblies. Towards the end of the second century the inevitable evolution began. The transalpine churches were the first to gather around the apostolic see. Saint Irenaeus recognized in it a certain moral superiority,² while at the same time combating the opinion of the Bishop of Rome in the dispute which the latter maintained with the Eastern churches. However, the ecclesiastical history of the first half of the third century — notably the letters of Firmilianus to Saint Cyprian against Pope Stephen,³ of the Bishop of Carthage to the prelates of Numidia, and those of the bishops who blamed Pope Victor strongly in the affair concerning Easter⁴ — proves that no doctrinal pre-eminence had been as yet accorded to the see of Rome. Among the great sees

¹ Saint Clement's *Epistles to the Corinthians*, and the *Pastor*, ascribed to Hermas, contain nothing dogmatic.

² . . . *Propter potiorē principalitatem* (*Adv. haer.* iii. 3). Saint Cyprian (*Epist.* 55) also calls the see of Rome *Ecclesia principalis*. Despite the famous passage, ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρῃ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Saint Peter did not enjoy any special privilege among the Apostles (Matt. xvi. 18; John xxi. 15-17).

³ Cyprian, *Epist.* 27, 55, 71. Firmilianus was bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; his vehement letter against Stephen, touching the nullity of baptism administered by heretics or those who have relapsed into error, is found *ap. Cyprian. Epist.* No. 75. He was an important personage in the Eastern Church, for we read that Origen sought refuge with him when Bishop Demetrius compelled the African prelate to leave Alexandria.

⁴ πλεονεξίαν καθυπακούοντων τοῦ Βίσιτου (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* v. 24, 11). In the affair of the Novatians, where the Pope deposed two Italian bishops, it was as metropolitan that he did this, and after they had been condemned by a synod (*ibid.* vi. 43).

there are gradations, but no subordination. The need of union for defence will at a later period establish a hierarchy; the primacy of honor will be changed into primacy of jurisdiction; and the Pope¹ will have an empire more vast than that of the Emperors. The centre of Christendom could not be elsewhere than at the tomb of Christ or in the capital of the world. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Hadrian made the pontifical fortune of Rome.

Before this supreme achievement of the hierarchy had taken place, unity was established,—thanks to the constant intercourse of the Christian fraternities among themselves. They interchanged the letters of bishops and the canons of councils, the churches who accepted them by that act acknowledging themselves to be “in communion” with those who had sent them. Union appearing to be a necessity, concessions were made on points of secondary importance, to avoid divisions which would have exposed the believers to perils greater than persecution; hence the changes which were carried into effect, imposed by circumstances, were in addition the logical development of the primitive doctrine and discipline. Thus the Catholic Church grew up gradually through the union of the individual churches. About the middle of the third century a man of signal ability, Saint Cyprian, presented the formulary of this union in a treatise on the *Unity of the Church*, in which he asserted that the Christian societies must remain in communion among themselves and with the apostolic see, which is the centre of Christendom.

“The primacy,” he says, “was given to Peter to show that there is but one Church; but the Apostles were what Peter was. The episcopate is one, and all the bishops are pastors; they have but one flock. The Church likewise is one, and it is diffused by

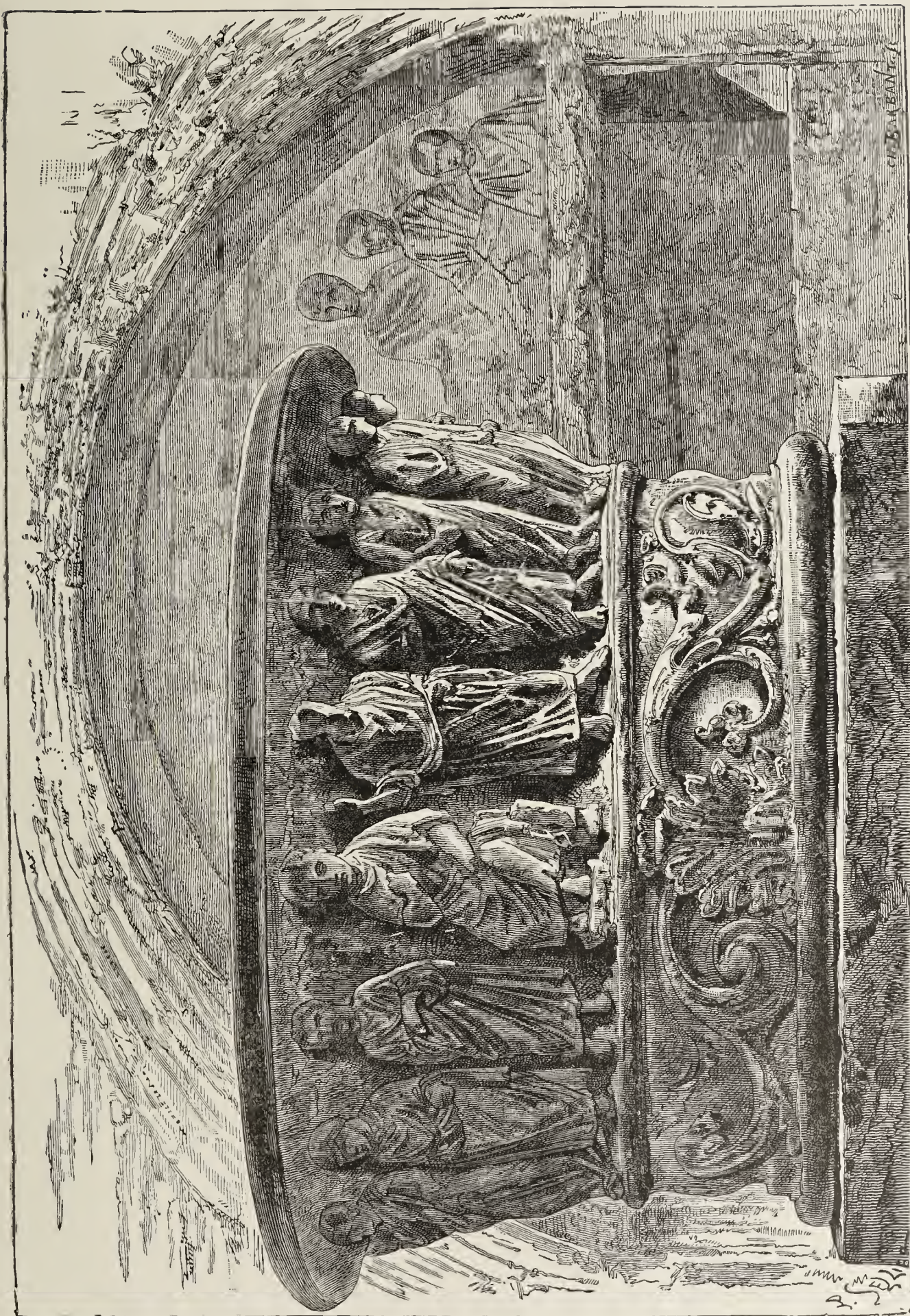
¹ The bishops, even the clergy, bore this title. The name of “pope,” which is synonymous with “father,” was not assigned exclusively to the Bishop of Rome until in later centuries. As regards universal jurisdiction,—or, as ecclesiastical writers now say, “primacy of vigilance and inspection,”—the history of the Church in the third century does not warrant the recognition of it in the Bishop of Rome, and a long time will yet pass before it is found. The Emperors Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius, having desired to fix by the constitution of 380 (*Cod. Theod.* xvi. 1, 2) the religion of their people (*cunctos populos . . . in tali volumus religione versari*), gave them as a rule of faith the doctrines taught by the bishops of Rome and of Alexandria, who are thus placed in the same rank. The constitution of 421 (*ibid.* xvi. 245) records that if in Illyricum any doubt shall arise concerning the ancient canons, the matter shall be referred to the bishop of the city of Constantinople, *quæ veteris Romæ prerogativa laetatur*.

its fruitfulness into several persons." The Rome see, then, is in his eyes the sign, and not the rule, of the unity, which was to him the result of the common concurrence of all the members. The needs, and the ideas to which these needs gave rise, did not at that time require a greater concentration of spiritual authority.

Of all these innovations, the most important in its historical consequences was the formation of a class of men not before in existence, — except, perhaps, in the interior of the peninsula of Hindostan. By the celibacy which will hereafter be imposed upon him, the Christian priest will become a new being in creation, as, by spiritual consecration, which neither civil authority nor popular election can give, he becomes a man apart in society. But the renunciation of the conditions of human nature will acquire for him a personal power in addition to the religious power that secured to him the right to remit sins and to bring down God upon the earth in the sacrifice of the altar. These priests will most frequently be good men, of an angelic purity, and with a devotion equal to any sacrifice; but sometimes also they will be men of such pride that they will set their feet on the necks of kings. Hence they will become formidable to civil society, because, being placed outside of it, they constitute a great sacerdotal body, desiring, and by virtue of its doctrines required, to seek by every means to prevail over society.

There was then about to be introduced into the Western world a condition the opposite of what Rome had known and practised for ten centuries; namely, the separation of the clergy and the laity, of the Church and the State. In the Graeco-Roman world the union of the believer with the divinity was directly realized: the father of the family was the priest of its gods. The Christian required an intermediary to enter into communion with the object of his worship. This produces a diminution of the individual dignity of the believer, while the authority of the body exclusively devoted to religious service is greatly increased by it. Attached to the priestly office for life by their faith and by their interests, since they live by the altar,¹ these men consecrated their activity,

¹ A Christian community of Rome, which, in the time of Pope Zephyrinus and the Emperor Severus, wished to have its especial bishop, assured him 150 denarii per month (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* v. 29).



THE APOSTLES: VASE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY, IN THE KIRCHER MUSEUM (ROLLER, PL. LXXIII. 3).

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their genius, their holiness, and sometimes their blood, to the aggrandizement of the Church. And as it is in the nature of every corporate body to work unremittingly to extend its influence and its privileges, the establishment of the clergy, such as it has been now described, secured to the Church a formidable army, which at the outset prevented it from perishing, and afterwards rendered it victorious. Never did the most loyal praetorian guard render to its Emperor so great service as the Church has received from the sacerdotal corps. The repository of religious doctrine and of moral truth, it has defended the one according to the time



RESURRECTION OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.¹

and the place, with the spirit of gentleness, of sacrifice, or of un pitying hardness ; but it has preserved the other in the darkest days of history, and still teaches it.

Thus the Church developed harmoniously its twofold life, doctrinal and disciplinary. One thing alone diminished in it,—the virtue of the miracle. In proportion as it had been extended more widely, it had lost that power which, to be admitted, has need of remoteness in time and space. The faith of the simple had filled with marvellous deeds the history of the early days ; Saint Irenaeus still believed “that the genuine disciples of Christ could deliver those possessed, foretell the future, heal the sick,

¹ From a mutilated sarcophagus. Four different scenes follow in succession on this bas-relief. 1st, on the left, Moses striking the rock ; 2d, adoration of Christ by four persons, among whom two are weeping and veiling their faces ; 3d, the resurrection of the daughter of the chief of the synagogue of Capernaum ; 4th, Christ standing with his right hand raised. This last part is incomplete (E. Le Blant, *Étude sur les sarcophages chrétiens antiques de la ville d'Arles*, pl. xvii. and p. 28).

and raise the dead.”¹ The doctors of the age of which we are speaking beheld these wonders no longer, while still believing that they might see them; and Origen shows us how enfeebled was the divine gift, daring to speak only of “the vestiges of them which exist among the Christians.” After the passage of another half-century we hear the Bishop of Caesarea acknowledge sadly that even these vestiges have disappeared.²

In contrast with the strong organization of the Church should be placed the weakness of the imperial clergy. Heads of Christian communities, the bishops, are judges for heaven, and judges also for earth; for the brethren acquire the habit of submitting to them the differences which arise among themselves. The pagan priests—mere masters of ceremonies in the religious solemnities—had neither vast domains and revenues of their own, as the Church will possess when its turn shall come to combat innovators, nor jurisdiction which gave them subjects, nor public teaching securing them disciples; and paternal authority, by closing to them the interior of the family, kept the women and children out of their influence. The old clergy was therefore incapable of contending with the new. The attack was admirably conducted; the defence was very poor. Shouts of the populace and sentences to death,—that is to say, acts of violence,—were not sufficient to hinder the spread of a religion which, born of the spirit, could have been arrested or restrained only by the spirit.

¹ Tertullian (*De Spect.* 29) recognized also in Christians the power to drive out devils, to perform miraculous cures, and to receive divine revelations. But when the interlocutor of Saint Theophilus of Antioch demands for his conversion that the bishop should show him a dead person raised to life, Theophilus replies to him (*Ad Autolyceum*, i. 8): “Do as the laborer who sows before he harvests; as the voyager and the sick who believe, the one in the pilot before arriving in port, the other in the physician before recovering his health.” And he is indeed right: belief in miracles requires a special disposition of mind; a man believes in them, not because he sees them, but because he thinks he sees them. This is the very expression of the bishop: “It is necessary to believe in order to see.”

² Origen, *Contra Celsum*, i. 2; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* v. 7.

V.—THE HERESIES.

ARMED with its canonical books and its ardent faith, sustained by its hierarchy, fortified by its discipline, the Church advanced slowly but surely to the conquest of the world. To the anarchy of doctrines it opposed the simplicity of its dogma; to philosophic freedom, the unity of its spirit; and it cast out of its fold those who, in the common *Credo*, sought “to make their selection.”¹

The narratives of the Gospels and the doctrinal exhortations of the Epistles had sufficed for the simple men whom the Church recruited in the first century. But when, in the second, the faith reached cultivated minds, these persons desired to co-ordinate their beliefs, and solve by the processes of the schools the questions which they involved. Then was produced, in the solutions of religious problems, the same diversity that we have elsewhere seen in philosophical solutions. Many said, like the Clement of the Christian romance of the *Recognitiones*, “I am sick in soul,” and sought by the most diverse ways a remedy for these sufferings of the spirit, more agonizing than any bodily pain.

The Christian sects drew their inspiration, it is true, from the same book; but this book admitted of a thousand different interpretations, and the prophecy of Simeon was fulfilled: “Behold, this child is set . . . for a sign which is spoken against.”² Even after the Council of Nicaea, Saint John Chrysostom could say: “The mysteries of Scripture are like the pearls which fishermen search for in the depths of the sea. It is difficult to penetrate its meaning, still more difficult for all to comprehend it in the same manner.”³ Infinite was, accordingly, the number of solutions proposed, and each solution found ready to accept it some of those men whom Saint James describes as “carried about with every wind of doctrine.” There were few great Christian communities whose bishop was not obliged to refuse the kiss of peace to men who presumed to discuss their faith.

The author of the *Philosophumena* enumerates thirty-two

¹ Heretic signifies in Greek, “the one who chooses.”

² St. Luke ii. 34: *Ecce positus est . . . in signum cui contradicetur.*

³ *Hom.* xiv., on the second chapter of Genesis.

heresies.¹ "Under the fire of persecution they swarmed," says Tertullian, "like scorpions on the banks of the Nile under the burning rays of the summer sun." We must leave to writers of religious history the study of these subtle discussions and of the rash audacity which has made humanity expend so much time and thought in vainly sounding the unfathomable. It will be sufficient for us to say that two principal categories of these insubordinate believers have been made, passing by insensible shades from almost complete orthodoxy to the absolute denial of a fundamental dogma,—the heretics of interpretation, who changed the meaning or the text of the Scriptures; and the heretics of inspiration, who preached another law. Even in the time of the Apostles, Cerinthus had regarded Jesus as a man; a little later, Ebion—or at least the Ebionites—believed him to have been born of Joseph and Mary, admitting that he had by his virtue merited the descending of the Holy Spirit upon him. These tenacious doctrines, found in the second century in the singular book of the *Recognitiones* and in the *Pastor* of Hermas, had been lately again advanced by Artemon and Theodotus of Byzantium. A bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata, shortly after took them up again, and they were destined to culminate in the great heresy of Arius. Now, to deny the divinity of Christ, or, like the Docetae, to reject his humanity, was to undermine the foundation of the new religious edifice; and again, it was shaken if, with Praxeas and Sabellius, the Son was confounded with the Father: but to assume, as Montanus did, the character of prophet, was to change its constitution and expose it to all the tempests raised by frenzied mysticism. If the former prevailed, religion was destroyed, since the great mystery of God made man disappeared; if the latter, there was an end to organization, that is, to the constant acting of force in the same direction, since "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth,"—doctrinal unity was at an end, and the universal Church no longer existed.

This latter variety of heresy was especially formidable because among the Christians it was constantly held that the gift of pro-

¹ In the fourth century Saint Epiphanius reckons sixty, and Themistius says that the Greeks have three hundred, different theories as to the Divinity (Soerates, *Historia eccles.* iv. 32).

phesy, while it had become enfeebled, had not ceased in the Church.

It had been said to the Apostles: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter. . . . But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, . . . shall teach you all things." The mystics drew authority from these words, and many believed, with Tertullian, that Montanus received the inspiration promised by Jesus. But this belief in special revelations, which destroyed the Gospel revelation while pretending to continue it, has given, and still gives, rise to the most dangerous sects. Marcion, in opposing to each other the Old and the New Testament, had already laid the foundation for Manichaeism.

In the midst of so many doctrines the Church made its choice with the wonderful spirit of order and government which it seems to have inherited from those who persecuted it. Although it had as yet determined only the main outlines of the temple which it was to rear, it had already, in the third century, its immovable Capitoline rock (*Capitolii immobile saxum*), against which the unceasing waves of heresy beat in vain. Irenaeus had just been writing against the Gnostics; Tertullian was engaged with the Valentinians and the Marcionites, with Hermogenes, who maintained the eternity of matter, with Praxeas, who was attacking the dogma of the Trinity; the Bishop of Antioch had condemned Montanus; the Bishop of Rome, Theodotus of Byzantium, and Minucius were arguing against the pagans.¹ The Church then knew her own will; and her sons, in listening to her, felt that they "rose from the profound night of error into the full light of wisdom and truth,"² while others, the philosophers, or "those who made a choice," were wandering at random. Finally, the Christian body already possessed what paganism never had,—a mighty force of discipline. By all these things its victory is explained.

¹ Minucius Felix was a Roman lawyer. In his *Octavius* he essays to imitate Cicero and Plato; but, with the exception of a pleasing preamble, his pretended dialogue is only two successive discourses. In the one he makes accusations against the Christians, in the other he refutes them; and nowhere does he set forth the dogma. It is a plea, sometimes violent, always superficial, but written with a certain elegance of style, and composed for men of letters.

² . . . *Discussa caligine, de tenebrarum profundo in lucem sapientiae et veritatis emergere* (Minucius, *Oct.* 1).

Along with this strength the Church had also its weak points,—in some of its clergy a spirit of pride and insubordination which led to lamentable falls;¹ among the members, vices which are too strongly planted in our nature for faith to be always able to repress them,² or the hypocritical profession of sanctity in order to profit by the alms of the brethren; in the days of trial which are to come, numerous apostasies,³ explained by the fact that the Church was chiefly recruited from among the lower classes,⁴ in which were found so many men “lions in peace, timid deer in time of conflict;”⁵ and finally, in the clerical order itself, rivalries and quarrels which led to schism or heresy.⁶ Born on the same day,

¹ Those of Tertullian, Origen, Tatian, etc. Saint Justin and Saint Irenaeus had adopted the doctrine of the Millenarians, and Clement of Alexandria sometimes borders on heresy.

² Origen goes so far as even to say, “Certain churches are changed into dens of thieves” (*In Matth.* xvi. 8, 22; xi. 9, 15). Saint Cyprian accused the priest Novatus of having suffered his father to die of hunger, caused his wife to miscarry by his brutalities, and committed, after his elevation to the priesthood, numerous acts of fraud and rapine (*Ep.* 49), — accusations which may have been false, but which show that the Church of Carthage was as much disturbed as that of Rome. Cf. Tertullian, *Ad Nat.* i. 5. In the *De Jejun.* 17, he also admits that there were many sources of danger in the agapae, the abuses of which Saint Paul had already noticed (1 Cor. xi. 21–22), and to which Saint John Chrysostom (*Hom.* 27 in 1 Cor. xi.) and Saint Augustine (*Ep.* 64) refer. See in the 35th canon of the Council of Elvira (about A. D. 300) the measures taken against the disorders of the Christian meetings at night.

³ On the apostasies, see Le Blant, *Mémoire sur la préparation au martyre*, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* xxviii. 54, 55, the *De Lapsis* of Saint Cyprian, and his letter No. 30.

⁴ . . . *De ultima faece collectis imperitioribus*. It is the pagan of the *Octavius* who speaks thus (see. 8), and Celsus (i. 27 and iii. 44) had already said: “They know how to win only the silly, vile souls without intelligence, slaves, women, and children.” Further on, in see. 12, Caecilius repeats: *Ecce pars vestrum et major et melior, ut dicitis, egetis, algetis, ope, re, fume laboratis*; and in his reply (see. 31) Octavius contents himself with saying: “We are not the dregs of the people because we refuse your honors and your purple.” Then he adds (see. 36): *Quod plerique pauperes decimur, non est infamia nostra, sed gloria*. The Church indeed gloried, and very justly, in seeking out the little ones; among the martyrs whom it most honored were Blandina and two women, Felicitas and Potamienna, who suffered punishment under Severus, all three of whom were slaves. The first martyr of Africa, Namphonius, or more properly Namphamo (see L. Renier, *Mél. d'épigr.* pp. 277 *et seq.*) and Evelpistus, who suffered martyrdom with Saint Justin, were of the same condition. Pope Calixtus (218–222) had been the slave of a freedman (*Philosoph.* ix. 12); and thus it must have been for a long period, for in the higher classes the entirely pagan education was hostile to Christianity, and a profession of the Christian faith rendered it necessary to break with society and its honors. Finally, it was not enough to strip “the old man” of his beliefs, but his pleasures and his wealth must also be taken from him; and many, like the young ruler of the Gospel, went away sorrowful when they were reminded of the precept of Jesus on giving up their goods to the poor. But we have seen that from the middle of the second century the Church also attracted to itself some great minds, — Aristides, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, etc.; and the comparative peace which it enjoyed during the first half of the third century gave opportunity for several conversions in great families (Cyprian, *Epist.* 80).

⁵ Tertullian, *De Cor.* i.

⁶ See the Epistle of Saint Clement to the Corinthians, on the “impious and detestable”

Faith and Heresy are two sisters, hostile, and yet inseparable: the one accompanies the other, and will forever accompany her.

There was a third and impure sister, Theurgy, who insinuated herself among Christians of all sects, as among pagans of every cult, and even among the philosophers. Miracles were everywhere demanded, and there was no lack of persons who pretended to perform them. In the condition of minds at that time, nervous diseases must have been frequent, those "possessed" numerous, and healers easy to be found, — self-deceived charlatans, or mere impostors, whose incantations always made dupes, and who bandied about from one sect to another the charge of working by the aid of devils. We have seen in the preceding volume the miracles of the pagans; the *Philosophumena* show that they appeared to continue, but that those of the Gnostics rivalled them. In concluding his account of the practices of these thaumaturgists the author adds: "That is the way to deceive the simple-minded."¹ If that were true, the whole world, pagans and Christians, merited the harsh epithet; for faith in the supernatural existed in all places, and in the Church more than anywhere else. So, without seeking or wishing to do so, she nourished in her bosom "doers of marvellous works;"² and of these inspired persons the larger number were women.

Christianity has always had a special tenderness for women; and this is just, for they have been, and still are, its most potent auxiliaries. Their lively imaginations, their delicate natures — still so virginal even in the wife and mother — were captivated by that belief which enjoined charity and love; which even, by the

sedition which had broken out among them; the letters of Saint Cyprian in respect to Novatus and Felicissima; what the angels in the vision of Satur say to Bishop Optatus (*Acts of Saint Perpetua*); and the circumstances which brought about most of the schisms and heresies. Thus Saint Jerome (*De Vir. Illustr.* 53) affirms that it was the jealousy and ill-conduct (*invidia et contumelie*) of the clergy of Rome which caused the fall of Tertullian. He shows "Rome convoking its Senate against Origen because the furious dogs who were barking at him could not endure the brilliancy of his speech and his knowledge" (Rufinus, *Apol. adv. Hieron.* ii. 20; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 8). By these "furious dogs" Saint Jerome meant the bishops of Egypt, who had cut off the great teacher from their communion. Origen himself applied to them the severe words of Jeremiah (ii. 8) concerning the guides of the people who were so apt in doing evil (Fragment of a letter quoted by Saint Jerome, *adv. Ruf.*). This evil dated far back. Saint Paul had to reprimand the Christians of Corinth and of Crete; Saint James, those who exaggerated the Pauline doctrine; Saint John, the Nicolaitans.

¹ *Philos.* iv. 4, 15: *πείθει τοὺς ἄφρονας*.

² The signification of the word "thaumaturgist" (*θαύματα* and *ἔρδειν*, from the root *ἐργ*).

legend of Mary Magdalene, the repentant sinner, granted favor and pardon to those who had loved much.

It was to them that these men appealed who gained admission into houses, "silent before the husband, inexhaustible in talk with the matron."¹ Celsus and the pagan of the *Octavius* indicate what part the women afterwards bore in the propagation of Christianity. The mother, having been won over, brought with her the son, and then the father and the entire household. The story of Saint Monica converting her husband and her son is very old and



BAS-RELIEF OF A CHRISTIAN SARCOPHAGUS.²

ever new. Hence the Church assured them an honored place. The Epistles speak of holy women filling an office in the religious community,—a testimony which Pliny confirms;³ and Lucian shows them carrying into prisons food for Christian captives. Though teaching and performing the rites of public worship were forbidden them, Jesus had given to them the good part. When Martha is indignant at being excluded from the priesthood, Mary replies to her with a smile: "Did he not tell us that our weakness would be saved by his might?"⁴ This divine power which raises them so high is love.

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 55.

² This sarcophagus represents the following miracles, — Daniel unharmed by the lions; Jesus changing the water into wine; and raising Lazarus. In the centre, a Christian in the attitude of prayer (Marble of the Catacombs of Calixtus. Roller, *op. cit.* pl. xlvii. fig. 2).

³ In the *Pastor* of Hermas there is also mention of deaconesses charged with the relations of the Christian community to the widows and orphans. In respect to the testimony of Pliny, see Vol. V. p. 288.

⁴ ὅτι τὸ ἀσθενὲς διὰ τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ σωθήσεται (Const. i. 21, *ap.* Bunsen, *op. cit.* vol. vi.). Cf. De Pressensé, *La Vie des chrétiens*, p. 77.

But love is a matter of sentiment much more than of reason. In a well-ordered heart it instigates a rational devotion to good works; otherwise, it causes disorder. By their nervous constitution, women are predisposed to excitement: some gave way to it; and these had visions, or prophesied.

In the ecstasy into which they lapsed after long fastings and macerations, they saw heaven opened, and conversed with angels. Tertullian has preserved to us one of these cases of psychological pathology: "One of our sisters," says he, "in the ecstasy which the Spirit bestows upon her in the very midst of our assemblies, has the grace of revelations; she sees and hears holy things, reads what is in the heart, and points out remedies for the sick. Let the Scriptures, a psalm, a homily be read, and immediately she has a vision. One day when I had discoursed upon the soul, she said to us, among other things: 'I have seen a corporeal soul, having a certain form and a consistency such that it might have been grasped; it was shining, of an aerial color, with a human countenance.'"¹ Tertullian must have been extremely delighted with a vision which confirmed his doctrine of the material nature of the soul. He had just been stating it, and the echo of the priest's words, instead of being another word, became a visible object: the visionary *saw* what she had just *heard*; and there is not a day in which this miracle does not occur in certain of our hospitals.²

The more intense the religious life became, the more sects multiplied. From time to time the confusion penetrated into the bosom even of the greatest churches, because the effort to bring everything under discipline, thus enhancing the episcopal authority, clashed with souls at the same time religious and independent. We know by the letters of Saint Cyprian what disorders existed among the Christians of Carthage. All those in revolt are naturally represented as wretches; it is the lot of the vanquished. But if we knew something more than the accusations "against the conspiring priests;" if those to whom the bishop imputes so many shameful deeds had told us the motives of their conduct, — perhaps

¹ *De Anima*, 9.

² Not only philosophers at the present day should study the sciences concerned with life; historians really have more need to understand them, for physiology played an important part in the world before there were physiologists, and it explains many facts inexplicable without it. It is sad to say this; but a hospital for the insane is also itself a book of history.

we should see in the excommunicated, instead of erring and guilty persons, men defending the liberty of their church.

This struggle between two principles, one of which was soon to stifle the other, existed at Rome, unknown even to those who maintained it. A book recently discovered, the *Philosophumena*,¹ written by a bishop, shows irritating discussions in this church.

The slave Calixtus had been ordered by his master to found a bank. He was unfortunate, — the author says, dishonest, — and was sent to the mill; that is, to the hardest labor. The brethren interfered; he recovered his liberty and, one day, outraged the Jews in open synagogue, which caused him to be condemned by the prefect of Rome to be beaten with rods and sent to the mines of Sardinia as a disturber of public order. When Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, obtained from the Bishop of Rome the names of the Christians banished to the island, in order to release them, Bishop Victor did not place Calixtus on the list; but the latter won over the messenger of the Empress, who took it upon himself to bring Calixtus away with the others. On his return to Rome he succeeded in getting into the good graces of Pope Zephyrinus, — “a simple-minded man,” says the author, “very avaricious, and somewhat venal,” who placed him in charge of the common cemetery of the Christians,² and later of the distribution of alms and of the administration of the church. In these duties, which brought him into daily contact with all the faithful, he won their confidence. The Christian community was at this time very much divided; he persuaded each faction that he was at heart with them, and on the death of Zephyrinus he was elected pope, notwithstanding his unfavorable antecedents (A. D. 218 or 219). Immediately disorder and the confusion in belief increased. Calixtus accused several orthodox bishops of heresy, while he himself taught that the Father and the Son were one and the same person. To multiply the number of his adherents, he admitted married men to the priesthood; to the church, sinners unreconciled; to the

¹ This manuscript, discovered in 1840 and published for the first time in 1851 by M. Miller, has been attributed to Origen, to Caius, a Roman priest, to Tertullian, and to Hippolytus, bishop of Portus Romanus, at the mouth of the Tiber. Whoever he is, the author was an adversary of Pope Calixtus, — a fact which renders it necessary, without rejecting his narrative, to make allowance for the passion which he displays in it.

² *Coemeterium Callisti*, discovered by the Chevalier de Rossi, and so well studied by him.

communion, men of easy morals, women living in concubinage, mothers who had exposed their infants. "Let the tares grow with the wheat," said he; "the Church has for its symbol the ark of Noah, which contained clean and unclean animals."¹ What truth is there in these accusations? We do not know. The author of the *Philosophumena* evidently leans towards the Montanists, and an indulgent bishop is displeasing to his austere mind. But if the picture be overdrawn,—even if, as has been maintained, in



POPE CALIXTUS (FROM A GILT GLASS).²

order to get rid of a humiliating revelation, the Calixtus of the *Philosophumena* is not he of the Church,—it no less remains true that Rome had at this epoch its revolts against the ecclesiastical chief; soon there was made an anti-pope, Novatian. Pope Stephen and the great Bishop of Carthage exchanged angry letters,³ and the Bishop of Caesarea says of his Roman brother: "His soul is deceitful, fickle, and not to be depended on."⁴ At Alexandria, Demetrius, jealous of Origen, will force him to leave that city, and later, excommunicate him from the Church. Later still, Paul

¹ *Philosoph.* ix. 12. The reproaches of the author are evidently exaggerated; but on the question of the troubles at Rome his testimony is confirmed by the *Pastor* of Hermas—*Vos infirmati a secularibus negotiis tradidistis vos in socordiam* (*Visio*, iii. 2)—and by what Saint Jerome says of the conduct of the Roman clergy with regard to Tertullian. Amm. Marcellinus relates (xxvii. 3), at an epoch when discipline was far better established, that when two bishops were disputing for the see of Rome, a terrible riot broke out, after which a hundred and thirty-seven dead bodies were found in the Sicinian basilica.

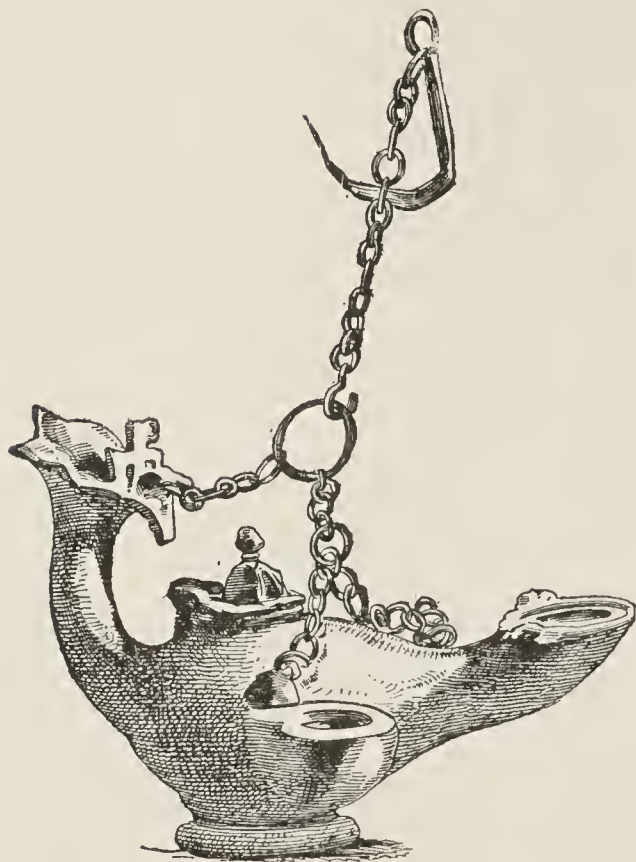
² Roller, *op. cit.* pl. lxxviii. No. 2.

³ Cyprian, *Epist.* 75, 25, and 26: . . . *Non pudet Stephanum, Cyprianum pseudochristum et pseudoapostolum dicere.* The Novatians, a rigid sect which did not admit of reconciliation with the *lapsi*, were still numerous in the fifth century (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* iv. 28).

⁴ *Id.*, *ibid.* 78, 25: . . . *Anima lubrica, mobilis et incerta.* The bishops of Tarsus and of Alexandria also sided with Cyprian against Stephen in this controversy.

of Samosata will be forced to leave the episcopal throne at Antioch, under accusation of avarice, bad morals, and heresy. The Christian communities, then, were not always the seraphic Church of tradition; they were composed of men, some of whom had great virtues, while others were subject to the same passions and vices with ourselves, and to all those transports of feeling which in certain natures often accompany the religious spirit.

As early as the time of Marcus Aurelius, Celsus had been able



CHRISTIAN LAMP OF BRONZE.²

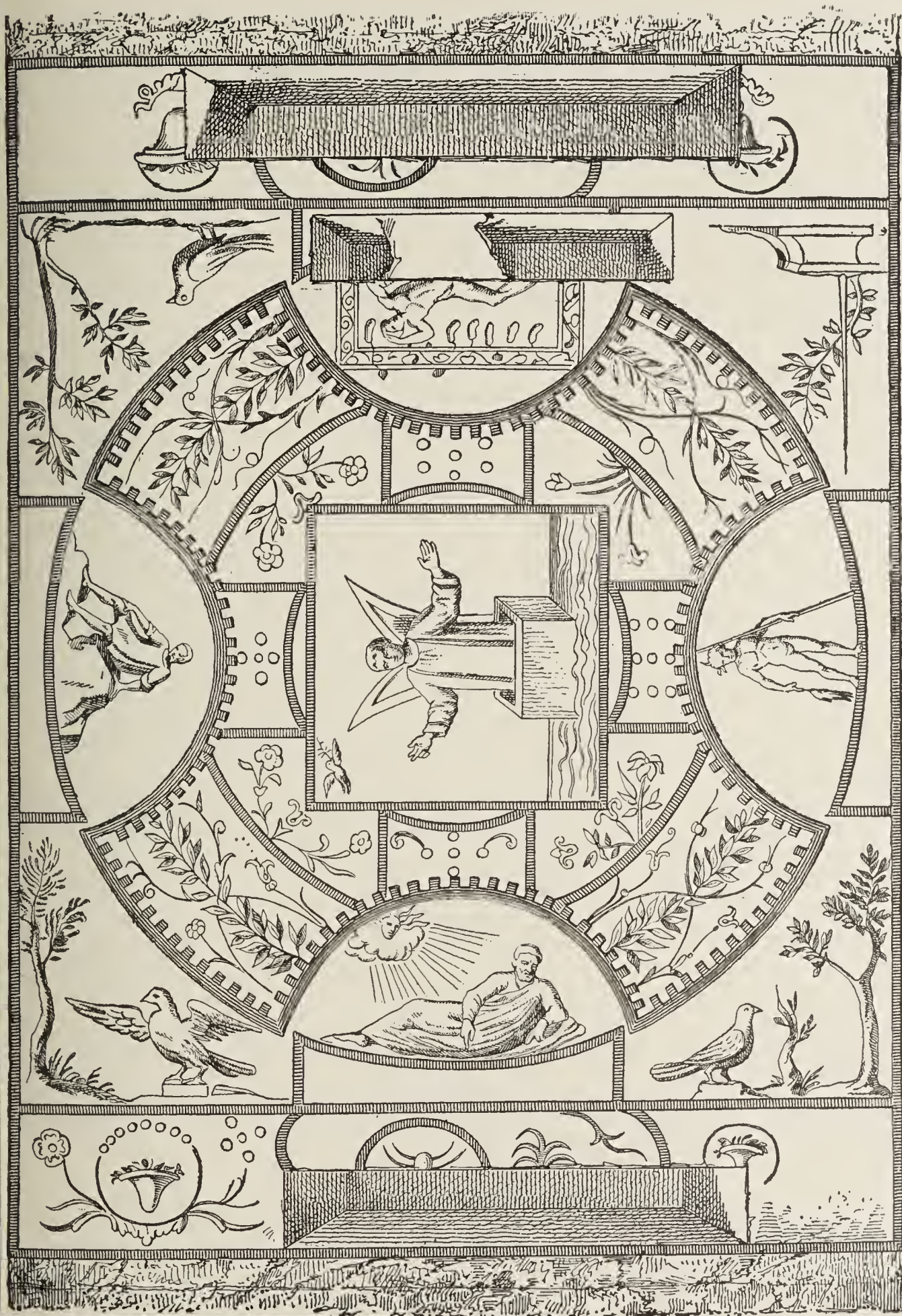
to assert that the divisions were already such among Christians that they no longer had anything in common except the name; and Ammianus Marcellinus, a pagan void of religious passion, who renders homage to the purity of the Christian faith, says in the following century: "Wild beasts are not more furiously enraged against man than are most Christians against one another."¹ Pious souls, on the contrary, have drawn from these persistent disorders proof that the new religion was of divine institution, since a human work could not have survived such

lacerations. We can only say that they were inevitable. Man, with all his passions, exists in the theologian as well as in the philosopher;³ for the violent or the peaceful are not made so by their beliefs or their ideas, but by the character and the habits which education has moulded, and the institutions to which the life has been conformed.

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 10 and 12, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 5.

² Roller, pl. xc. fig. 12. This lamp (of about the end of the fourth century) bears the cruciform monogram.

³ This is akin to what Saint Paul says to the Corinthians (2 Cor. iii. 1-3), when he places in opposition in the Christian the *spiritual* man and the *carnal* man.



NOAH'S ARK. CENTRE OF A FRESCO ; THE CEILING OF A CUBICULUM OF THE CATACOMBS OF DOMITILLA : MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY (ROLLER, PLATE XXXV. AND BOSIO, PAGE 243).

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CHAPTER XCI.

THE PERSECUTION UNDER SEVERUS.

I. — IDEA OF THE STATE AMONG THE ANCIENTS; OPPOSITION OF THE CHRISTIANS.

THE imperial government was well aware of the powerful organization of the Church,¹—these communities corresponding with one another from one end of the Empire to the other; these men who without money traversed land and sea, who everywhere saw, at their approach, doors and hearts thrown open; who, even with persons of another language, were able to make themselves understood by a sign, without need of words.² The imperial government, so afraid of secret societies, found an immense one extended everywhere,—an evident peril to itself, for it was within the state another state, possessed of all the means of action; but tolerance was a necessary consequence of the religious organization of the Romans, who never had a theocracy, because in their pontiffs the civil character took the precedence of the sacerdotal. The priests of Jupiter and of Mars were judges, soldiers, administrators; and they had learned, in the government of men, that the law touches only acts, and has no hold on the thoughts. Accordingly, they never attempted to impose their beliefs upon others, and tolerated every religion so long as it did not find expression in acts considered offensive to the Emperor or dangerous to the Empire. In the midst of the profound peace which Severus

¹ Ulpian, one of the counsellors of Severus, has collected in the seventh chapter of his treatise *De Off. proc.* all the edicts relating to the Christians (Lactantius, *Inst. div.* V. ii. 19).

² All ecclesiastical history testifies to the constant communication among the churches. They consult one another, make known the decisions which they have reached, their sufferings, and their triumphs. Even written documents circulated rapidly. Saint Irenaeus, at Lyons, borrows several passages from Theophilus of Antioch; the author of the *Philosophumena* at Rome, and Tertullian at Carthage, copy the Lyonnese bishop.

secured to the Roman world, when no apprehension of public danger excited men's minds, the wise statesmen who ruled public affairs made no effort to proscribe the new religion, while yet leaving it under the menace of Trajan's rescript. This rescript it was impossible to repeal so long as the Caesars retained the religion of their fathers; for the title of Pontifex Maximus was equivalent at Rome to the oath taken by the kings of France on their coronation day, to preserve the orthodox religion and to tolerate no heretics within their domains.¹

This partial toleration assured to the Church only an uncertain peace, for the best of the pagans resembled the historian Dion Cassius, a timorous spirit, the foe of all violence, who at the same time wished to have the Christians punished, because in his judgment innovators in religion were of necessity innovators in politics and instigators of disorder.² From time to time a popular outbreak made a few victims, or an over-zealous governor applied the old laws of the Empire. Severus at first manifested toward the Christians only great indifference; for he saw among them merely "carders, fullers, and shoemakers,"³ and it did not seem to him that an Emperor had anything to fear from this God of the lower classes. It is not certain that he sent any one, before the year 202, into exile, or to the quarries whence Marcia, under Commodus, had released them;⁴ and the Christians were without doubt included in the favor which he accorded "to the sectaries of the Jewish superstition,"—that of being eligible to municipal honors, with release from obligations contrary to their beliefs.⁵ There were

¹ Oath of Louis XIII. at his coronation: . . . *Outre je tascheroy à mon pouvoir, en bonne foy, de chasser de ma juridiction et terres de ma sujétion tous hérétiques dénoncés par l'Église* (*Le Cérémonial françois*, by Théod. Godefroy, 1649).

² Dion, lii. 36.

³ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 55.

⁴ After having enumerated those whom the Christian communities assisted,—the poor, orphans, old servants, and the shipwrecked,—Tertullian (who, however, has a habit of extreme exaggeration) adds: *Et si qui in metallis, et si qui in insulis vel in custodiis, ex causa Dei sectae* (*Ap.* 39). We have seen above (Vol. VI. p. 460, note 4) that Marcia had obtained the release of those who were in the mines of Sardinia; and there is no reason to think that the measure may not have been general.

⁵ *Digest*, l. 2, 3, sec. 3. This interpretation is supported by the treatise *De Idololatria*, in which Tertullian recites what "the Christian magistrate" must refuse to do. We see also by the *Acta martyrum* that judges sought to substitute a political accusation for a religious one, demanding of the Christians brought before them not, "Are you Christians?" but "Have you attended unlawful assemblies?" The teaching of the Jews was public. . . .

even some of them among his attendants. Before he became emperor a Christian had healed him of some disease; and after his accession to the throne he caused search to be everywhere made for this individual, and gave him a position in the imperial household.¹ There were other Christians in the palace, if the cele-



GRAFFITO OF A CRUCIFIED FIGURE WITH AN ASS'S HEAD.²

brated *graffito* of a crucified man with the head of an ass, found lately on the Palatine, is, as seems probable, of this time. We know, moreover, that Caracalla had a Christian nurse,³ and that

Judaei palam lectitant, rectigalis libertas vulgo aditur sabbatis omnibus (Tertullian, *Apol.* 18), and the government saw to it that no one should disturb their religious service (*Philosoph.* ix. 12). They received this right from Augustus (*Josephus, Ant. Jud.* xvi. 6, 2).

¹ Tertullian, *Ad Scap.* 4.

² The figure on the cross is looking at a person below him whose arm is raised in the attitude of adoration. The Greek legend below, badly engraved, signifies: "Alexamenos adores (his) God,"—evidently a sarcasm against some comrade in service in the palace of the Caesars. Near this *graffito*—which is now in the Kircher Museum—these words have been found engraved: *Alexamenos fidelis*. Father Garucci, who published this caricature in 1857, believes its date to be early in the third century, because at this epoch the pagans accused their opponents of adoring an ass's head. In 1882 a fresco was discovered at Pompeii, representing a parody of the Judgment of Solomon,—doubtless executed for the house of some inhabitant of that pleasure-loving city who wished to make sport of the Jews, his neighbors.

³ *Lacte Christiano educatus* (Tertullian, *ibid.*).

when a boy he was so enraged because one of his playmates was scourged for being of the Jewish or Christian religion, that he for a long time refused to see those who had beaten the child.¹ When we read in the *Digest* that Severus ordered persons accused of holding unlawful assemblies to be brought before the city prefect, we may conclude from this, since the guarantees of justice are increased in proportion to the higher rank of the judge, that the rescript must have been favorable to the Christians: the old, harsh law against associations was about to be tempered by political prudence. The same Emperor authorized poor people throughout the Empire to form colleges with monthly assessments.² As a matter of fact, this rescript was favorable to the Christians, and we have no right to say that Severus did not think of them in writing it.³

But the Emperor disliked tumult of any sort, and the religious disputes occasioned a great deal, especially when Tertullian joined in them, as he constantly did. This son of a centurion was a man of strife. He made attacks in his own defence, and struck at all about him, hurling invectives equally at the pagans, their magistrates, their gods, "admitted to heaven by a decree of the Senate," and at those of his brethren whom he treated as heretics,⁴ — never dreaming that the orthodox were reserving the same lot for himself. In a recently discovered fragment of Clement of Rome is found this prayer to God: "It is thou, Almighty King, who hast given the kingdom to our sovereigns that we might be in subjection to them. Grant them, O Lord, health and peace, that they may without hindrance exercise the power which thou hast confided unto them over all existence. Direct, O Lord, their will

¹ Spart., *Caracalla*, 1.

² . . . *Permittitur tenuioribus stipem menstruam . . . non tantum in Urbe, sed et in Italia et in provinciis . . . divus Severus rescripsit* (*Digest*, xlvii. 22, 1). He prohibited them in the armies (*ibid.*), where they were nevertheless formed. Cf. L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* 70.

³ Tertullian attests (*Apol.* 39) that this custom of furnishing the *menstruam stipem* existed among the Christians; they had, then, taken advantage of the law of Severus. Yet he says that the pretext for the persecution was the unlawful assembling (*De Jejuniis*, 13). Severus, who merely proposed to check the propagation of the new religion, may only have struck a blow at the meetings which had not assumed the legal character of the burial societies.

⁴ He refuses to them the right of discussion, and treats them as condemned without appeal. In the *De Praescriptis ad haereticos* he opposes to them only the judicial form of the ordinance. "You have on your side," he says to them, "neither time nor prescriptive right;" and this argument suffices for him.

according to right and in conformity with what is agreeable unto thee, so that, using authority with mildness, they may find thee favorable . . .”¹ This is the attitude of the primitive Christians, of the Apostles Paul and Peter, after them of a Bishop of Rome at the end of the first century, and of Theophilus of Antioch in the middle of the second. How different these holy men are from the fiery Carthaginian writing, in his treatise *De Idololatria*, a veritable declaration of war against pagan society! In another² we hear this repeated cry of revolt: “It is our business to contend against the institutions of the ancients, the laws of our masters;”³ and this moral revolt was legitimate, since the imperial government, not comprehending the sacred rights of conscience, had treated the Christian belief as a crime. The life of Christians Tertullian would have sad and sombre, ever in sackcloth and ashes, in prayers and tears. “The woman who does not live like a repentant and mourning Eve, is condemned and already dead. Her ornaments are the trappings of her burial.”⁴ And this severity accorded so well with the spirit of the Church that the authority of the priest of Carthage, notwithstanding his fall, was very great, and has remained so to this day. “Give me the master” (*Da magistrum*),⁵ Saint Cyprian was accustomed to say, when he asked for a book of the celebrated doctor; and Bossuet, who often copied Tertullian, speaks in very nearly the same words.

Minucius Felix has not the genius, nor has he the harsh manner of the Carthaginian; but he is even more bitter. It is not enough for him to make a laughing-stock of the gods of Rome; he tramples under foot the last homage that remains to her, — the pride in her memories. Saint Clement recognized Rome as his country; speaking of her, he says: “Our legions, our generals.”⁶ Minucius is no longer a Roman; for him, the fortune of this people arose out of wickedness, its history is filled with crimes, and Rome has never been other than a den of bandits.⁷ With less wrath, though as much

¹ *I. Clem. ad Cor.* chap. xxxvii.

² *Adversus hæc nobis negotium est, adversus institutiones majorum, auctoritates receptorum, leges dominantium, argumentationes prudentium* (*Ad Nation.* 20).

³ See also the violent outbursts of the *De Corona*, 11. This old spirit of the Church should be noted, for it reappeared as soon as the laity began to withdraw from her administration.

⁴ *De Cultu fem.* i. 1.

⁵ Saint Jerome, *De Vir. illustr.*

⁶ This is the famous *ἡμεῖς*, which was for so many years a subject of dispute, but can be so no longer.

⁷ *Octavius*, 25.

disdain, Saint Augustine says of the glory of the Romans: *Acceperunt mercedem suam, vani vanam.*

The sentiments of Minucius are those of the greater number of Christians. Sanctus, one of the martyrs of Lyons, while undergoing the torture, is asked his name, his city and country, and whether he is free or a slave. But he has no name, he has no country. To every question he gives but one answer: "I am a



SCENE OF PERSECUTION: THE ACCUSATION.¹

Christian!" It is a noble reply; but it is also very menacing. *Civis Romanus sum!* cried the Roman of the old days, attesting his nobility and his right; even the Stoic was still a citizen of the world: but the Christians, disowning their earthly fatherland, acknowledge no city but heaven.

Greece and her glories, which are those of the human mind, find no favor with them. To them, Socrates is a buffoon,² Aristotle³

¹ Fresco of the catacombs of Calixtus, over the crypt of Pope Eusebius. Unique example of a judgment-scene in primitive Christian iconography (Roller, vol. i. pl. xxvii. No. 1, and pp. 161, 162).

² Octavius, 38: *Scurra Atticus.*

³ *Miserum Aristotelem* (Tertullian, *De Praescr.* 7). Clement of Alexandria, on the contrary, rendered at the same period a solemn act of homage to Aristotle, copying him in his *Hypotyposes.*

a wretch, and they pronounce anathema against all the great philosophers. What a difference between the apologists of the first age and those of the second! And in the space of half a century, from Justin to Minucius Felix, from Athenagoras to Tertullian, how hatred has become envenomed! The Church, when she was mistress of the world, became a great school of respect and submission to law; but she was not so in the early centuries.

To these maledictions against history and philosophy, — that is to say, against civilization, — were added menaces against the Empire and its sacrilegious Babylon. The sect of Montanists, which increased in numbers daily, and even, if we may believe the pagan orator of the *Octavius*, all Christians,¹ announced at Rome its impending destruction, and their gloomy prophecies gave rise to the belief that they would willingly hasten that ill-fated hour. “If all others thought as you do,” said Celsus to them, “the world would become a prey to the Barbarians.”² And, in truth, it did become so when all the world believed as they did. There were at this time, indeed, in Alexandria, men such as Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen, who, sincere admirers of the ancient philosophy, would gladly have “disengaged the pearls hidden in a pernicious alloy,”³ or, as Origen said, “carried off the gold of the Egyptians to make it into sacred vessels for the altar.”⁴ But when they spoke of their contemporaries, it was with the bitterness of Tertullian. Cyprian, one of the most moderate of them, wrote in the midst of a pestilence and famine to the proconsul Demetrianus: “If I have not replied to your barking against God, it is that I may not expose our sacred truth to the outrages of dogs and swine. . . . These scourges are the divine vengeance which strikes the hardened sinner. What! you blaspheme against the true God, you persecute his servants; and you wonder that the rain does not descend upon your arid plains, that the springs are dried up, that the hail destroys your crops, and the poisoned air

¹ *Oct.* 10. The *Octavius* must have been written about the year 180, and the treatise of Celsus is probably of the same time.

² *Contra Celsum*, viii. 68. In speaking thus I merely state a fact; namely, that the Christians, after having been an element of dissolution to the pagan empire, were not able to save the Christian empire when they had become masters of it. As to the causes of the Empire's downfall, they were many, as will later be shown; and all that is said in the present chapter proves that Christianity was one of these causes.

³ *Strom.* I. i. sect. 17.

⁴ *Epist. ad Gregor.* 1, 30.

your population? These visitations are the consequence of your iniquities!"¹ The pagans retorted in the same language, and moreover cried out: "The Christians to the lions!" On both sides passion conceived gods in its own image, angry and violent, while impassive Nature, pursuing the course of her immutable laws, bore fruitful clouds to one locality, and deadly miasmata to another.

The Romans, who had so keen a relish for tragic declamations, and the Emperor, who had himself composed them, would not perhaps have paid much attention to the sombre pictures which so many Christians unrolled before their gaze, if the new doctrine had not in other ways appeared dangerous to them.

Saint Paul had said: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God."² And some years later Clement of Rome had drawn up for the churches a prayer in which he besought God to give to the Emperors health, strength, and security.³ But the spirit of submission was no longer that of even a part of the believers. Severus was a soldier. What was he to think of men who replied to Celsus, when the latter reproached them for abandoning the Empire, assailed by the Barbarians: "It is true that we do not bear arms, and that we would not, though the Emperor should try to compel us; we have another camp, where we combat for him by our prayers."⁴ As a jurist, how could he regard a sect in which it was taught that when the law of the Church is in opposition to the law of the state, it is the former which must be obeyed,⁵ "because faith does not admit the allegation of necessity."⁶ Lastly, as a ruler and the necessary conservator of an order of things which had always exacted devotion to social obligations, it was inevitable that he should seek to stay the progress of a religion whose sectaries lost their interest in public duties.

According to the ideas of the ancients, whether the state were

¹ *Ad Demetrianum*, 8. In this very spirited letter against pagan society, Cyprian also announced the approaching destruction of the world.

² Romans xiii. 1.

³ *II. Clem. ad Cor.* 59-72. Ed. Hilgenfeld.

⁴ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 73, 74. And conduct accorded with the language used. The recruiting officer presents to the proconsul of Africa a young man selected to be a soldier; but the young man replies that, being a Christian, he is not permitted to bear arms. For this refusal to take the military oath he was executed (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, p. 299, *ad ann.* 295 or 296).

⁵ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, v. 37.

⁶ *Non admittit status fidei allegationem necessitatis* (Tertullian, *De Cor.* ii.).

represented by a man, a senate, or a popular assembly, and whether it were a famous city like Athens or Rome, or the most obscure municipality, the citizen owed to it all his faculties,—his valor in battle, his fortune in public necessities, his life in great perils. This absolute dependence upon the state, so much opposed to our ideas of individual liberty, had given to patriotism an energy which ours has lost; and this is why we do not comprehend, or comprehend imperfectly, so many things in ancient society. Thus in the case of the persecutions, to do justice to both sides, we must take into account the horror which men inspired who set up in opposition to the common country, bequeathed to them by their ancestors, another which they had made for themselves. “Why,” they were asked, “why do you shun municipal offices which maintain the law?” “Because in each of your cities we have another country which God has made for us,—the Church; and it is to the government of this that those of us who have authority by eloquence or moral character should be devoted.”¹ Many systems of philosophy, even the one at that time in vogue, also recommended separation from the world; but in the schools, this spirit was inoffensive, because it remained simply a psychological curiosity. In the Church, it must have appeared to the authorities as a social peril: first, because it was the vital principle of a society hostile to the established order; and next, because the refusal to occupy municipal offices disorganized the city, making public duties weigh heavier on those who accepted them.

Many other things still further scandalized the pagans. Then, as to-day, large families were honored, and the Roman law punished celibacy. Now, the Gnostic Christians—almost as numerous as the Orthodox—cursed the flesh as the principle of all evil, and practised celibate asceticism. Others, regardless even of the conditions of human life, placed among their pious books treatises “on the disadvantages of marriage.”² Some dared to think that it

¹ *Scimus, in singulis civitatibus, aliam esse patriam a verbo Dei constitutam, eos ut Ecclesiam regant hortamur qui potentes sermone et quorum mores sani sunt* (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 75). “To-day even, in every country, we should prosecute any association propagating certain ideas promulgated by Tertullian in chapter lxxxi. of the *De Corona*, 22” (De la Berge, *Trajan*, p. 213).

² This was one of the first works of Tertullian; and Saint Jerome recommended the reading of it to Eustochia (*Ad Jovinian*. i. and *Epist.* 18, *ad Eustoch.*). Tertullian, however, did not himself profit by it, for he married, and in the second of his letters to his wife (*Ad Uxorem*,

would have been far better if Adam had remained in a state of virgin purity, and God had found other means of placing upon the earth human beings to worship him.¹ One of them went so far as to write: "If we have children, we desire that they may go before us into the presence of the Lord." Tertullian, it is true, who spoke thus, says of himself: "I do not dispute, I do not go to war,



A WOMAN AT PRAYER, AND THE GOOD SHEPHERD.²

and my sole care is to exempt myself from all care; I have withdrawn from the people (*secessi de populo*)."³ Or this: "We have no other interest in this world than to escape from it at the earliest moment." We might, on the other hand, accept this thought of Montanus, "Man is a lyre which the Spirit of God strikes,"⁴ if it did not by the annihilation of our will and absolute abandonment to Providence expose us to another peril; that is to say, to the

ii. 9) he draws a very beautiful picture of Christian marriage. But in the first he represents marriage to be unsuitable for believers, and makes a vow of continence. The Marcionites forbade conjugal union; Tatian condemned it; the Valentinians, Basilians, Enekrates, or Continents, did the same; Origen rendered himself incapable of it, and his imitators continued to be numerous enough as late as the fourth century to require that the first canon of the Council of Nicaea should prohibit mutilation. Other Gnostic sects destroyed marriage by community of wives. Clement of Alexandria, a contemporary of Tertullian, but of a milder character, combats, in book iii. of the *Stromata*, all these excesses, and exalts anew the sanctity of the married state. His doctrine has remained that of the Church; but the Montanist spirit, which is not dead, has covered the world with convents.

¹ We find traces of these singular opinions in Justin, Gregory of Nyssa, and Saint Augustine; Macarius Magnes maintained that Adam made no use of marriage until after his sin.

² Painting from the Catacombs of SS. Nereus and Achilleus (Roller, pl. xlix. fig. 1).

³ Tertullian, *De Pallio*, 5.

⁴ Saint Epiphanius, *Adv. haer.* 48.

hazard of taking individual inspirations for revelations from on high.

The eloquent and gloomy declamations of Tertullian were not the rule of faith of all believers. There were certainly Christians in the army, in municipal offices, in civil functions;¹ and all did not renounce their property through apprehension of the fate of Ananias, or give up commerce and industrial pursuits for fear of infringing upon the prescribed rules of the Church with regard to lending money at interest.² There were those who, penetrated



THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES.³

with the sweetness of the Gospels, forgot the God of inexorable vengeance, and saw only the Good Shepherd bringing back upon his shoulders the sheep which had gone astray. Those were the neophytes who remembered being fed by the Church with milk and honey "at their entrance into the land of promise:" they took delight in life, in the sunlight and the flowers, in friendship and love, as in gifts of their Heavenly Father; and they were the most numerous, because they obeyed the true laws of our nature, against which no general revolt is possible. But they were not the most zealous. Those upon whom had been poured out

¹ They were there, but in very small number. The famous words of Tertullian, "We fill the cities, the camps, the Senate" (*Apol.* 37), are contradicted by all the facts and testimonies. (See Vol. VI. p. 428.) The number of bishops found in certain countries should not mislead us in regard to the number of the faithful. "Wherever three Christians are united," says Tertullian (*Exhort. cast.* 7), "there is a church;" and the *Constitutions of the Church of Alexandria*, i. 13 (*op.* Bunsen, *op. cit.*), require that when the members are few in number, ἐν ἀναγκῇ ἐπὶ τρεῶν καὶ μὴ πλεονάζοντων τριῶν τῶν ἀναγκάζοντων ψευδισθῆναι περὶ ἐπισκοπῶν . . . they should seek the assistance of three judicious men sent by the neighboring churches.

² Lending at interest was considered usury, and condemned under that title.

³ Bas-relief found near the church of S. Lorenzo fuori Mura (Bosio, p. 111, and Roller, pl. xliii, fig. 2). The Good Shepherd is represented, in the centre and at the two extremities of the bas-relief, guiding "his sheep."

the wine of wrath and the intoxication of death, cried out, with Minucius Felix: "It is no longer a time to adore crosses, but to bear them;"¹ and they were the martyrs of the persecution which we are about to narrate.

II.—RESCRIPTS OF TRAJAN, MARCUS AURELIUS, AND SEVERUS.

SOPHOCLES, in his *Antigone*, had already shown in magnificent terms the opposition which may be found between civil law and natural law, "between the decrees of men and those ever-living laws which no hand has written, but which the gods have engraved on the hearts of all." The pious young girl who braves "the proud threats of a tyrant, that she may not incur the wrath of the immortals," already speaks as the martyrs will speak at a later day; and we sympathize with the poet when he nobly defends the rights of conscience. But while inspired singers are sometimes prophets of the future, the ruler is always the man of the present, and it is his duty to compel obedience to the law which his predecessors have bequeathed to him, and whose execution society demands of him.

Tertullian claims from Severus religious liberty: "It is human right (*jus humanum*)," he says, "that each one may worship whom he pleases; and it is contrary to religion to constrain to religion."² These were beautiful words spoken by the suffering Church; later the victorious Church repudiated them, and certain sects of modern times reject them still, saying to their opponents: "In the name of your principle we claim liberty; by virtue of ours, we refuse it to you."

Origen also is indignant that the Church should be included within the State; and he is right, for the spiritual tribunal ought to be shielded from all constraint. But at a future day the Papacy, with as little wisdom as the Empire, will seek, by an opposite error, to place the State within the Church.

Minucius Felix in his *Octavius*, the priest of Carthage in his *Apology*, and with them all the defenders of the new faith, plead the innocence of the Christians; and they are thoroughly right. But none of them understood that historic fatality which, in religion as well as in

¹ *Octavius*, 12: *Jam non adoranda, sed subeunda, cruce.*

² *Ad Scapul.* 2: *Non religionis est cogere religionem.*

government, obliges that which exists to seek to defend itself, and compels the old society to repulse those who assume to change its manners, ideas, and institutions. To the Romans, conservators of the ancient social order, the Christians were dangerous revolutionists; their acts of devotion were sacrilege; their faith, the destruction of the official worship and of the political organization of which this worship was an essential element.¹ Hence the reasoning of Tertullian, demanding that the ordinary rules of justice be applied to the Christians, is unsound, in spite of the eloquence which supports it. "All crimes," he says, "are imputed to them; but they are interrogated only on this topic, — 'Are you a Christian?' 'Yes.'"² This was the entire procedure; and torture, commonly used to force the culprit to confess his crime, is used in the case of the Christian to extort from him his permission, by the denial of his faith, that the judge may declare him innocent. In case he persists, however, a more complete investigation is not necessary. The usual accusations, — adoration of an ass's head, murders of children and the eating of their flesh, incestuous orgies in the darkness of night, — all this interests the populace; but the judge does not consider it. In Christianity he sees only mystic reveries and anti-social doctrines; in the Christian only a public enemy who, upon the establishment of his identity as such, shall be at once thrown to the beasts. The Roman Catholic Inquisition asked no more than this to send an Albigenian or a Protestant to the stake.³

These persecutions, which excite our horror, appeared to the contemporary mind merely questions of public order. Against the Christians Rome did what modern governments do against those who attack their essential principle; but it did so after the methods of a time when penal legislation was lavish of death.⁴ This is

¹ . . . *Sacrilegii et majestatis rei convenimur* (Tertullian, *Apol.* 10). He recognizes further on that the Emperors could not be at the same time *et Christiani et Caesares* (*ibid.* 21).

² *Confessio nominis non examinatio criminis* (*ibid.*, *Apol.* 2).

³ By the declaration of July 1st, 1686, Louis XIV. pronounced the penalty of death against those who should be found performing religious services other than Catholic (Isambert, *Coll. des anc. lois franç.* xx. 5). Down to the time of Louis XVI. Protestants were deprived of civil status, and in the present century there have been cases of *auto-da-fé* in Spain. As to sorcerers — wretched madmen whom the Church considered as imps of Satan — they were burned by thousands. In Franche-Comté there were, from 1606 to 1636, a hundred executions and sixty banishments for deeds of sorcery (*Hist. de Jussey*, by l'Abbé Coudriet, p. 379). Under Louis XV. witches were also burned (Maury, *Magie et astrol.* p. 222); and only a few years ago some peasants threw into a furnace an old woman whom they believed to be a witch. [On this question, see the interesting chapter in Lecky's *Hist. of Rationalism.* — ED.]

⁴ This harshness of penal laws lasted very long. In the eighteenth century men contented

why extenuating circumstances should be recognized in favor of those who ordered persecutions, while we at the same time condemn in the strongest terms the ideas and institutions which rendered these enormities possible. There is another duty to fulfil; namely,—to distinguish among the persecutors those who yielded reluctantly and in slight measure to the passions of the times, and those who, sharing them, used cruelty instead of indulgence in the execution of unjust laws. Severus should be placed among the former; for though he was less wise than Hadrian, he was wiser than Diocletian.

Trajan had made a state crime of the public manifestation of the Christian faith;¹ but he had interdicted the seeking for this. Under Marcus Aurelius we find a decree stating: “He who by superstitious practices shall affright the inconstant souls of men, shall be banished to an island.”² This rescript did not designate the Christians by name; but they were certainly included among those whom it was to affect. This was a second step towards persecution. In 202 Severus took a third. On the banks of the Nile he placed under lock and key the books of Egyptian theology, and while passing through Palestine he promulgated an edict which prohibited Christian and Jewish propagandism.

In all antiquity, religion and the state had been so closely united that a Roman could not comprehend the one without the other. It had been the same at Jerusalem; hence Rome had officially permitted the religion of the Jews, by recognizing, in the treaties made with them, their nationality. It was easy then to apply to them the rescript of Severus and to keep them shut up within their own race, the more so as they but seldom sought to escape from it. But the Christians formed a sect, and not a nation; they were recruited everywhere, even among the Barbarians. To enter into communication with the enemies of the Empire, was in itself a very grave matter; but to induce citizens

themselves with burning the books; but in the Middle Ages they burned those who wrote them. Richelieu, even, had a poor poet hanged whose only crime was the writing of some bad verses against the government.

¹ See Vol. V. p. 289. Tertullian (*Apol.* 2) marks very correctly the character of this rescript: . . . *Inquirendos quidem non esse, oblatos vero puniri oportet*; and one fact, placed by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* v. 21) under the reign of Commodus, shows the manner in which the law was executed (cf. Vol. V. p. 462, note 2).

² *Digest*, xlviii. 19, 30.

to abandon the national religion was nothing less than treason, and the government naturally sought to stop the desertion of these fugitives from the Roman fatherland.

The edict, however, did not go so far as to proscribe the existing Christian communities; it only tended to prevent them from spreading. Now, this prohibition was contrary to one of the most imperative commands of the evangelical law, "Go and teach all nations." It would have put a stop to conversions, and it gave authority to take action against those who sought to make them.

However, the search for Christians was not as yet commanded, since Tertullian wrote undisturbed his books which are so severe towards the pagans, and since priests could teach, heretics discuss, believers bring aid openly, as did Origen,¹ to the martyrs in prison, assist them at the tribunal, encourage them even in the amphitheatre; and finally, since, notwithstanding the very large number of bishops,² not one of them perished; to the Christians

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 3.

² In the single province of Africa, Cyprian assembled in council eighty-seven bishops (*De Haereticis baptizandis*, in *Cypr. Oper.*, p. 328), and when he suffered martyrdom in 258, he was the first African bishop who sealed his faith with his blood. The fiery Tertullian lived undisturbed even to extreme old age (*Usque ad decrepitam aetatem*. Saint Jerome, *De Vir. illustr.* 53). The policy of the persecution called that of Severus was not to attack any of the most important men, though they were very easily to be found. It has been customary to mention two bishops, Zoticus, bishop of Comana in Cappadocia, and Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, as martyrs in this persecution. Of the first, Tillemont makes no mention, and the Bollandists say of him (July 21st): *Ubi et quo tempore martyrium fecerit fateor mihi hactenus incompertum esse*. As for the second, Saint Cyprian and Clement of Alexandria do not refer to him, though he was the most prominent of their contemporaries, and Tertullian, who often copies him, does not give him the title of martyr. The Carthaginian priest, in one of his books written after the persecution of Severus (*quum furor Severi restinctus fuerat*), and at a later date than the year 208 (cf. Noesselt, *De Vera aetate script. Tertull.*, in the Tertullian of Oehler, vol. iii. pp. 540 and 605), mentions in the same sentence Saint Justin, whom he styles "martyr," and Irenaeus, of whom he merely says that he was *omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator* (*Adv. Valent.* 5). If the Bishop of Lyons had suffered martyrdom, Tertullian would have given to him the same title as to Justin. The Bollandists are reduced to saying (June 28th): *Nihil invenimus de S. Irenaeo quod esset antiquitate aliqua . . . spectabile*. The records of his martyrdom do not in fact exist, and Gregory of Tours is the first who relates it (*Gloria Mart.* 50). Saint Jerome, in the *De Vir. illustr.*, terminates the chapter which he devotes to Irenaeus (the 35th) by these words, which necessarily call for mention of the martyrdom if it had taken place: *Floruit maxime sub Commodio principe*. True, he says of him in his commentary *In Isaiam*, 64: *Diligentissime vir apostolicus scribit Irenaeus episcopus Lugd. et martyr, multarum origines explicans haereseon*. But, on the one hand, this book of Saint Jerome having been completed later than the year 411, — that is, two centuries after the death of Irenaeus, — there may be in this an echo of the improbable legend reported by Gregory of Tours, which was at this epoch already current. On the other hand, the words *et martyr* may be a gloss slipped into the text. We know what strange liberties were taken by the copyists of manuscript or by those under whom they

there were left their chiefs and their teachers, their assemblies, and their elections, their schools of catechumens, and their cemeteries,¹ — that is to say, their organization and their worship. There were executions to frighten the Church and to put a stop, by means of terror, to its propagandism. But the strokes fell only on the insignificant and the slaves, whose lives were of little consequence. The victims at this time were those enthusiasts of the lower classes who in all revolutions are the most active, — those who by their own acts designated themselves to the judge or to the mob by their ardor in seeking punishment, or those who, denounced to the magistrate by personal enemies, stood their ground in such a way as to bring them under the penalty of the law. But the vocation of martyrdom is never the lot of any but a small minority; and giving information in cases of this nature had its dangers, because the *delator* was not sure but the accused might overthrow the accusation with the single word that was asked of him: “No, I am not a Christian!” and, as we know, the informer who did not prove his statement incurred grave responsibilities.²

The edict of Severus not ordering search to be made, each governor enforced it according to his own character. He of Cappadocia, irritated against the Christians who had converted his wife, by violent tortures compelled several of them to sacrifice to the gods.³ Lyons had the same ardor for idolatry which it displayed later in

labored. The recent discovery of three letters of Saint Ignatius would be a new proof, if we may believe Cureton, in his *Corpus Ignatianum* (Berlin, 1849).

¹ The use of the cemeteries was for the first time prohibited to the Christians by an edict of Valerian (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vii. 11; and Saint Cyprian, *Epist.* 83).

² An individual who accused Severus of magic before his elevation to empire was crucified. Macrinus caused to be put to death the *delatores, si non probarent* (Capit., *Macr.* 12); and Gratian, later, renewed this law, — the *delator* who does not prove his accusation well founded shall suffer the penalty which would have been inflicted on the guilty (*Cod. Theod.* ix. 1, 14). If the charge was admitted, the accuser received one fourth of the property of the condemned; it was therefore a business at once lucrative and dangerous. This legal responsibility explains why the judges should have refused to receive mere denunciations by letter, and required the presence of the *delator*. (See below, pp. 71 *et seq.*) The letter of Marcus Aurelius which circulated in the Christian schools of the time of Tertullian is absolutely false; but the penalty which it fixes for the calumniator, — *adjecta etiam accusatoribus damnatione et quidem tetriore* (*Apol.* 5), — is a characteristic feature of the morals of the age. The condemned Christians, being held as traitors, had their goods confiscated (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 2), and we have just seen that a part of them reverted to the *delator*. But their poverty rendered this profit insignificant. Hence the most usual accuser was the populace, who by their clamors, and sometimes by their acts of violence, provoked an execution.

³ Alexander, bishop of this province, was imprisoned.

behalf of the new faith. If the tradition of the Church were sufficient to dispense with all historic testimony, Saint Irenaeus perished there; but his contemporaries, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Saint Cyprian, know nothing of his martyrdom. The two great African cities, Carthage and Alexandria, which were rivals in magnificence,¹ were two ardent centres of religious life.² As soon as the edict of Severus became known to them, they gave loose rein to their pagan fury, and the magistrates, formally summoned to fulfil their legal duty, yielded to the popular pressure. Many victims are mentioned in Egypt,³ among whom was the father of Origen. Yet at Alexandria the bishop, Demetrius, the teacher of Clement and Origen, despite the ardor of his zeal, escaped; it was the same in all the great cities,—at Carthage, Antioch, Smyrna, and Rome. The Roman clergy were already numerous, and angry dissensions were in existence among them at this very moment; none of their members, however, appear to have been disturbed: Pope Zephyrinus and Calixtus, who was at that time very prominent, certainly were not. In the province of Africa, one of the latest evangelized, those who perished were almost all obscure Christians.

THE CITY OF ANTIOCH PERSONIFIED.⁴

¹ Herod., vii. 6.

² See, Vol. VI. p. 466, note 3, the riots caused at Carthage by the priestesses of the goddess Caelestis. As for Alexandria, it was the great laboratory of ideas and beliefs.

³ It is doubtful, however, whether Christianity was then very widely spread in Egypt outside the capital, and whether, consequently, the persecution made many martyrs there. Down to Demetrius, who at that time occupied the episcopal chair of Alexandria, all Egypt had had but a single bishop (cf. Eutychius, *Ann.* i. 354, Pocock's trans.), while the province of Africa, evangelized at so late a period (Tillemont, *Mém. ecclés.* i. 754), reckoned a very great number of them. But in Alexandria the persecution was violent. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 1: *μάλιστα ἐπλήθυνεν ἐπ' Ἀλεξανδρείας.*

⁴ Engraved stone (cornelian, 14 mill. by 11) of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,749 of the catalogue, and Collection de Luynes, No. 98. M. Chabouillet thinks he recognizes the Emperor Alexander Severus in the warrior who is crowning the city. Bronze coins struck at Antioch during the reign of this Emperor bear the same types. See, in Vol. V. p. 155, the statue of the Vatican, another personification of the city of Antioch.

The persecution began at Carthage after a riot, the populace seeking to force the governor to close the cemeteries of the Christians.¹ Before this extreme was reached, there had certainly been acts of violence in the streets; and the more the Christians gained assurance by their increasing number,² the more determination and haughtiness they manifested in their language towards the pagans, the more odious their adversaries would consider these men who seemed to desire to set themselves above other citizens by manifesting contempt for their gods, their festivals, and their pleasures.³ Thus, when Rome in 204 displayed the extreme of magnificence in celebrating the Secular Games,⁴ Tertullian had just written, with his usual vehemence, a book against all public amusements.

The first martyrs of Carthage were the twelve Scillitans, in 180,⁵ among whom were several women. In the second "combat,"

¹ In remembrance of the ten plagues of Egypt, ecclesiastical writers have maintained that the Church has suffered ten persecutions. They reckon four anterior to Severus,—under Nero (see Vol. V. pp. 3 *et seq.*), Domitian (*ibid.* p. 209), Trajan (*ibid.* pp. 288 *et seq.*), and Marcus Aurelius (*ibid.* pp. 493 *et seq.*); that of Severus—which is known to no pagan writer, and of which Lactantius does not speak—is counted the fifth, and represented as very violent. It is strange that Dion Cassius, so prolix a writer, has not once named the Christians, and that in all the *Augustan History*, several editors of which lived under Constantine, we find barely a few words about them. Evidently these persecutions, which for fifteen centuries have disturbed the human conscience, took place in the inferior strata of society, or at least did not agitate the surface, and, down to Decius, were only local police measures or popular excesses.

² We know the exaggerations of Justin (*Dial. cum Tryph.*), of Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* i. 3), and of Tertullian (*Ad Scap.* 2, and *Apol.* 37); they are famous. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, written towards the close of the second century, exhibits the Christians as very few in number, and very obscure. At the middle of the century following, Origen, comparing them to the mass of the pagans, yet said: ὡς νῦν πάντ' ὀλίγοι (*Contra. Cels.* viii. 69). In Syria, the province most easily opened to Christianity, "no Christian catacomb anterior to the fourth century, no well-authenticated Christian monument reared before 'the peace of the Church,' has up to the present time been discovered" (De Vogüé, *Inscr. sémitiques*, p. 55). Still, it is certain that the number of the Christians increased greatly during the long repose which they enjoyed between Severus and Decius.

³ The terms of reproach applied to the Christians by the pagans are enumerated in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix by Caecilius, the advocate of paganism.

⁴ Since the establishment by Augustus of the *Ludi saeculares*, to commemorate the founding of Rome, these games had been celebrated by several of the Emperors. To conform to their name and to the intention of Augustus, they should have occurred at regular intervals once in each century (*saeculum*); but such was by no means the case. They were celebrated by Augustus in the year 17 B. C.; by Cláudius in 47 A. D.; by Domitian in 88; by Antoninus in 147; by Septimius Severus in 204; and they were observed for the last time by Philippus 248 A. D., just a thousand years from the founding of the city.

⁵ I place their execution at this date, following M. L. Renier, who has with correct judgment recognized the consuls of A. D. 180, *Praesente II et Conliano coss.*, in the consuls mentioned in the *Acta*, whose names have been corrupted by the copyists. What is said by Tertullian, *De Corona (initio)*, concerning the long peace which the Christians enjoyed in Africa before

which took place the tenth year of the reign of Severus (202),¹ the slave Felicitas and the matron Perpetua also perished, with others who made confession.

Their sacrifice is related at length in the *Martyrology*, in accounts filled with miraculous visions and heroic deaths. These soldiers of Christ were noble combatants, but of a sort hitherto unknown. In ancient times a man died for his country, — that is to say, for his fellow-citizens; in the first century of the Empire, Thrasea and many others died for human justice: now men died for the sake of heaven. In three phrases may be summed up the vast revolution which in three centuries had occurred in men's ideas: the *civis Romanus sum* of the great days was an utterance of patriotic pride; when the Stoic called himself *civis mundi*, he still did not deny his country: but the Christian who, to the question of the magistrate, "Who are you?" rejoined "*Servus Christi*," was no longer of this world. This change proclaims that in the state now about to be formed, ties of family and of country will be to many as if they did not exist. The disciples of the new faith had been forbidden to take thought for the morrow. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Together with the noblest words on the duties of charity, justice, and the love of one's neighbors are evangelic commands which have cost humanity many tears, and instigated many separations. "I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother: . . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own

A. D. 202, justifies our opinion. The Seillitan martyrs appear to have been the first in Africa (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, p. 34), as those of Lyons were the first in Gaul. Sulpicius Severus (ii. 46) says in reference to the tardy evangelization of Gaul: *Serius trans Alpes Dei religione suscepta*. On the order of proceedings followed in the trials of the Christians, see the learned paper by M. Le Blant in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* vol. xxx. part second. The author makes a distinction between the *Acta*, or transcriptions, more or less exact, of the judicial examinations, which the Christians sometimes obtained by payment of money, and the *Passiones*, in which the historical foundation is burdened with marvellous legends. The *Acta proconsularia* of Saint Cyprian (see in chap. xvi.) and the *passio* of Saint Perpetua give a good understanding of these two kinds of documents. On the sources of certain martyrologies, see another article of M. Le Blant, 1879.

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 2.

household." And to his disciples asking what reward they should have for following him, Jesus replied: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, . . . but he shall receive eternal life." We must observe this side of Christianity; for these words still exercise their influence, and human society has been profoundly affected by them. Before giving rise to monastic orders, to all macerations of the flesh, and to heroic acts of devotion which are still exhibited,¹ they were the inspiration of martyrs. Read the Acts of Saint Perpetua. It has been said that certain pages seem to have been written with a pen plucked from an angel's wing, so touching is the poetry found in them. I grant it; and if this death was not courted,² — if, dragged against her will before the judge, Perpetua refuses to conceal her faith, — it is the sentiment of duty and honor which animates her, and her courage is sublime. But as a historian of human deeds, I must in the saint see also the woman who publicly defies the laws of her country, and must exhibit the mother abandoning her child, the daughter exposing her aged father to every insult. "Have pity on my white locks," he said to her; "have pity on thy father! Behold thy mother, thy brothers, thy son, who cannot live without thee! Suffer thy pride (*animos*) to bend; do not condemn us all to mortal woes!"³ And he kissed her hands, he threw himself at her feet. But she exclaimed: "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not." The procurator also cried out to her: "Spare then thy father, spare thy son!" As a last trial, he caused her father to be beaten with rods in her presence. She persisted; and it is her glory, that also of the Church which knew how to inspire such sacrifices, and gathered the fruit of them. But it must be said, this young woman who went to her death crushing the hearts of all her family, is a heroine of a peculiar nature. She died for herself in order to live eternally; but true heroes die for others: the sister of charity does so.

¹ By missionaries and sisters of charity.

² It must have been; since the law forbade searching for Christians, and attacked those only who offered themselves as martyrs.

³ *Ne universos nos extermines* (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*). Her father goes away. "I thank God," she says, "that I have been several days without seeing my father; his absence permits me to enjoy a little rest" (*Ibid.*). Saint Irenaeus of Sirmium will speak in the same way (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, i. 430 *et seq.*).

Modern theologians continue to say: "The question of salvation is a personal question, and it matters little that the family or the city be broken up by it,"¹—as if the city and the family were not of divine institution, since they are a necessity of our nature! Christianity loves death, adorning it like a bride impatiently awaited, calling it life: *Vivit*,—writing upon the tomb of the



BURIAL VAULTS (CUBICULA). WITH PAINTINGS IN FRESCO.²

believer, "He lives for immortality." Thus men felt in the primitive Church. The more tears and broken hearts there were around these voluntary victims, the more meritorious appeared the sacrifice, and the higher the martyr seemed to ascend into the glory of God, whence he would protect those whom he left behind. Heaven and earth were henceforth but one city, having in the saints its patrons, and in its divine membership the company of

¹ Abbé Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, p. 53.

² Sepulchres adjoining the Jewish catacombs of the *Via Appia* (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. iv. No. 2).

the faithful,¹—a beautiful and poetic belief, which again found Jacob's ladder with "the angels of the Lord ascending and descending upon it." Accordingly, each community was happy and proud of these immolations. Sometimes friends and neighbors, in their fierce piety, exalted the ardor of the martyrs: they encouraged them with the words of the Apostles, and showed them all the celestial army present at their triumph, and ready to receive them into glory. Origen urges his father to the execution;² Numidicus "with a saintly joy" beholds his wife burning on the pile; the mother of Saint Symphorian, her son going to death; another, her husband in the midst of tortures. "Raise your eyes on high," those who stood by cried to the martyrs, "and you shall see him for whom you fight." The love of God takes the place in their hearts of all those affections which God has nevertheless made a duty in bestowing them upon us. Heaven is opened to their gaze; of the earth they see, they feel nothing, not even the claws and teeth of the lions which rend their flesh.³ Dragged in the arena by a furious bull, Blandina and Perpetua "converse with the Lord," and, being taken up bleeding, they ask when the "combat" will begin; a divine frenzy had possessed them. Man must have an ideal; it is the honor of Christianity that its own was placed so high, at a time when all others had ceased from the earth. At the same time it was perilous to place this ideal so far from earth,—not from the enjoyments which are to be found here, but from the duties which we are here required to fulfil.

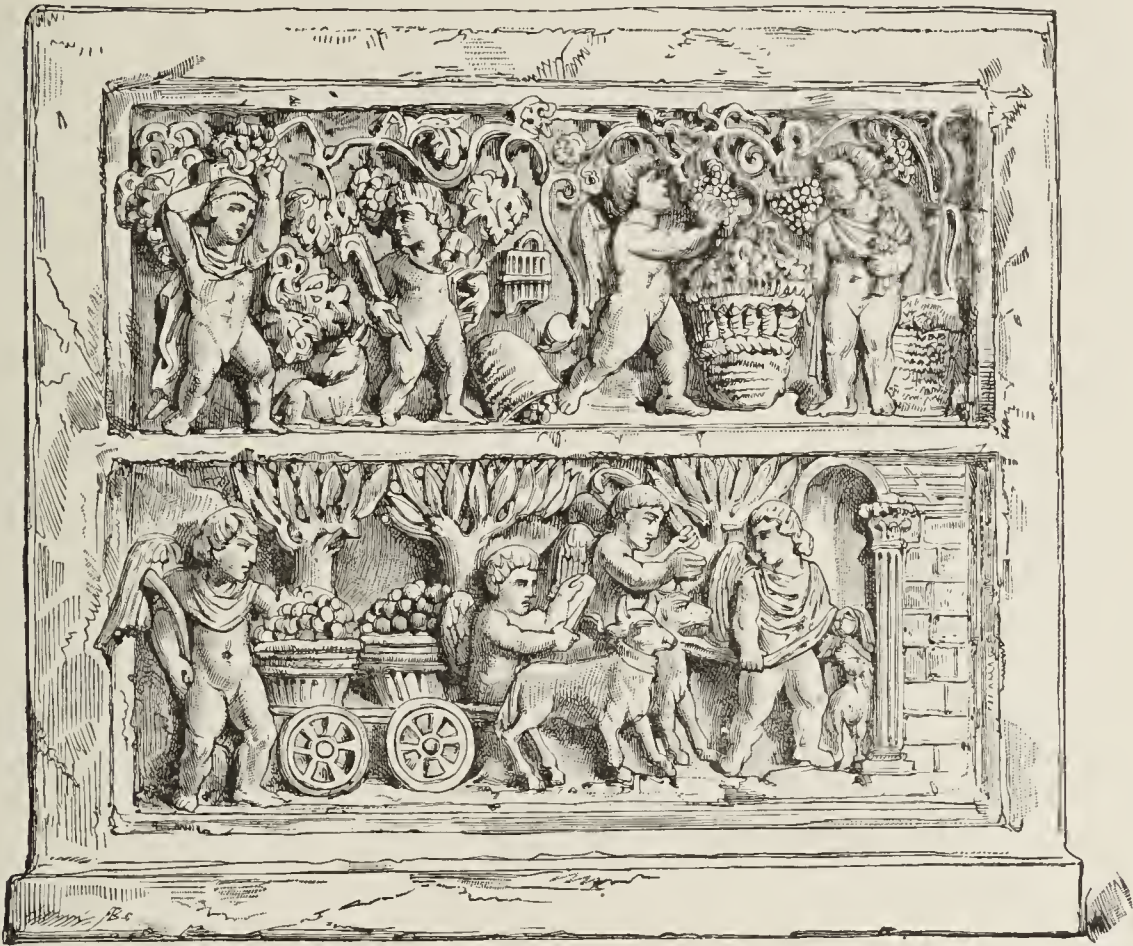
First by mysticism, then in trances, lastly, by visions, the soul ascends to the heavenly regions, and while still attached to the body, loses itself in God. During this intense concentration of the thought upon a single object, the physical sensibility is abolished by a sort of temporary paralysis of the nervous system, which causes even the feeling of pain to disappear, as we suppress it naturally by anaesthetics. This condition—which is now well understood—is called, in the language of the Church, "rapture;" in the language of the world, the enthusiasm which makes the

¹ The expression is Saint Augustine's: . . . *tanquam patronis* (*De Cura pro mortuis*. 19). An inscription calls them . . . *apud Deum advocati* (De Rossi, *Roma sotter.* ii. 383).

² Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 2. In his treatise *Ad Martyres*, 27, Origen shows all heaven contemplating the combat and the victory of "the confessors."

³ *Nihil crus sentit in nervo, cum animus in caelo est* (Tertullian, *Ad Mart.* 2).

strength of heroes: that of Mucius Scaevola burning his hand in the fire of the altar, and that of martyrs tranquilly enduring the severest tortures. "Look us well in the face," said a martyr to a pagan present in the prison at the Christian's last repast,—"look at me well, that you may recognize me at the Last Judgment."



VINTAGE SCENES ON A SARCOPIHAGUS IN THE LATERAN MUSEUM.¹

This ardent faith, these tragic spectacles, were disastrous to paganism. Conscience revolted at witnessing such deaths, and men who had come to these scenes as to an entertainment, went away troubled in heart and asking themselves: "What can this faith be then which gives such courage and such hope?" The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church,² which, "like a vine whose

¹ Roller, pl. xlv. fig. 3. Symbolical representation of the harvest made by the Church "in the vineyard of the Lord." The figures on the sarcophagus represented on the next page are as follows: Above, at the left, Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus; Saint Peter and the cock; Moses receiving the law. In the medallion, the dead commemorated by the sarcophagus. At the right, the sacrifice of Abraham, and Pilate about to wash his hands. Below, Moses and the pillar of fire; Daniel and the lions; Jesus healing a blind man; Jesus blessing the bread and fishes.

² Tertullian, *Apol.* 50.

shoots are cut back, became the more fruitful for it.”¹ Oftentimes even the magistrate would gladly have dismissed the “devoted,” who came and asked for death with the fervor of a Hindoo throwing himself under the car of Juggernaut.² The imperial officer required only a word from them, an appearance of submission to the law. “Since you believe that there is but one God, sacrifice to Jupiter only,” was the appeal often made to them.³ But the martyrs refuse, and the Church encourages them in their noble obstinacy. Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen even drew up manuals for “preparation” for martyrdom.⁴ The *passiones*, read in church after the gospel, constituted another preparation. What contagious ardor was awakened in these assemblies where men were taught that the martyr became “the companion of Christ in his suffering,”⁵ or when the deacon read the letter of Saint Ignatius to the Romans who desired to save him from execution: “I write to you living, but enamoured of death.⁶ I am afraid of your affection! What is death for Christ? A beautiful sunset preceding the radiant dawn of a divine day. I am God’s wheat; the teeth of the beasts will crush me, and I shall become the purified bread of the Lord. Ah, let me enjoy my lions!”⁷

¹ Saint Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.* p. 337 (1636).

² Clement of Alexandria, blaming what he calls “a brutal impatience for death,” adds: “Their death is not a martyrdom, but a suicide; they are like the Indian gymnosophists, who light their own funeral pile” (*Strom.* iv. 4); and the sixtieth canon of the Council of Elvira contains the same teaching. This intensity of heavenly love, which tends to absolute separation from the world and union with God, is a psychological condition which is also found among the sūfis of Persia and elsewhere. See the translation of the *Fruit Garden* of Sa’adi by Barbier de Meynard.

³ *Acta S. Tarachi* in 304; *S. Philae* in 302.

⁴ Le Blant, *op. laud.* p. 65. The fourth book of the *Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria is of this character. It was customary even to employ, in preparing the martyrs for the torture, prolonged fastings, which heightened the mystic exaltation; and to *martyribus incertis* was served a bountiful repast, ending with narcotic or intoxicating draughts, so as to prevent a failure, by delivering to the executioner only an inert body no longer sensible to pain. . . . *Condito mero, tanquam antidoto praemedicatum ita enervastis ut paucis unguis titillatus (hoc enim ebrietas sentiebat) . . . respondere non potuerit amplius, atque . . . cum singultus et ructus solos haberet . . . discessit* (Tertullian, *De Jejuniis*, 12). Saint Augustine (*Tractatus*, xxvii. on St. John, sect. 12) makes allusion to this usage: . . . *quia bene manducaverat et bene biberat, tanquam illa esca saginatus et illo calice ebrius, tormenta non sensit.*

⁵ *Quid gloriosius quam collegam passionis cum Christo factum fuisse?* (Letters of Roman Confessors to Saint Cyprian: Cypr., *Op. Ep.* 31.)

⁶ Ἐρωὼν τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν (*Ep. ad Rom.*). On the Letters of Saint Ignatius, see Vol. V. p. 289, note 3.

⁷ Ὁναίμην τῶν θηρίων (*ibid.*). It cannot be doubted that in the narrative of the theatrical

With the account of the tortures the martyrologists mingled that of the visions which the confessors had had in the exaltation of faith and in the fever of the last day, or of those which were attributed to them to exhibit the promised reward. "We suffered," says Satur, one of the companions of Perpetua, "and we forsook our bodies. Four angels bore us to the East, towards an intense light. Arriving at a garden where rose-trees tall as cypresses were perpetually strewing the earth with their flowers, we approached a place whose walls seemed to be made of light. At the gate four angels were standing: they clad us in white robes of dazzling purity; and when we had entered, we heard voices repeating: 'Holy, holy, holy!' In the midst we saw as it were a man seated; he had white hair and the countenance of a young man. The angels raised us up, and he gave us the kiss of peace; and the four and twenty elders seated at his side said unto us: 'Go and be happy!' And, indeed, we experienced more delight than we had ever known in the flesh." Thus "the joy of heaven rose out of the dismal prison, and the crown of flowers bloomed above the bloody thorns."¹ In this literature of martyrdom, which is so entirely a new thing, we still find the same inability of the imagination to picture the abode of the blessed; it was, however, a realm of poetry hitherto unknown, and enthusiastic souls were content with it.

The pagans said of the martyrs: "These men are mad." Bossuet, taking up the word to extol it, celebrates "the madness of Christianity;" and we still praise "the foolishness of the cross."

To an ostentatious display of piety and courage by the confessors, which provoked the pagans and impelled them to new acts of violence, Clement prefers the prudence which, without cowardly concessions, avoids peril;² Saint Cyprian invites martyrdom, yet will not have men hasten to meet it;³ Saint Peter of Alexandria even consents that his life should be ransomed by payment of money;⁴

suicide of Peregrinus, Lucian had in mind the martyrs who also "offered themselves voluntarily to death."

¹ See, in addition, the fine peroration of the *De Mortalitate* of Saint Cyprian.

² *Strom.* iv. 4, 17. He himself retired from Alexandria at the moment of persecution.

³ See Saint Cypr., *Ep.* 83: *Letter to the Clergy and the People of Carthage*.

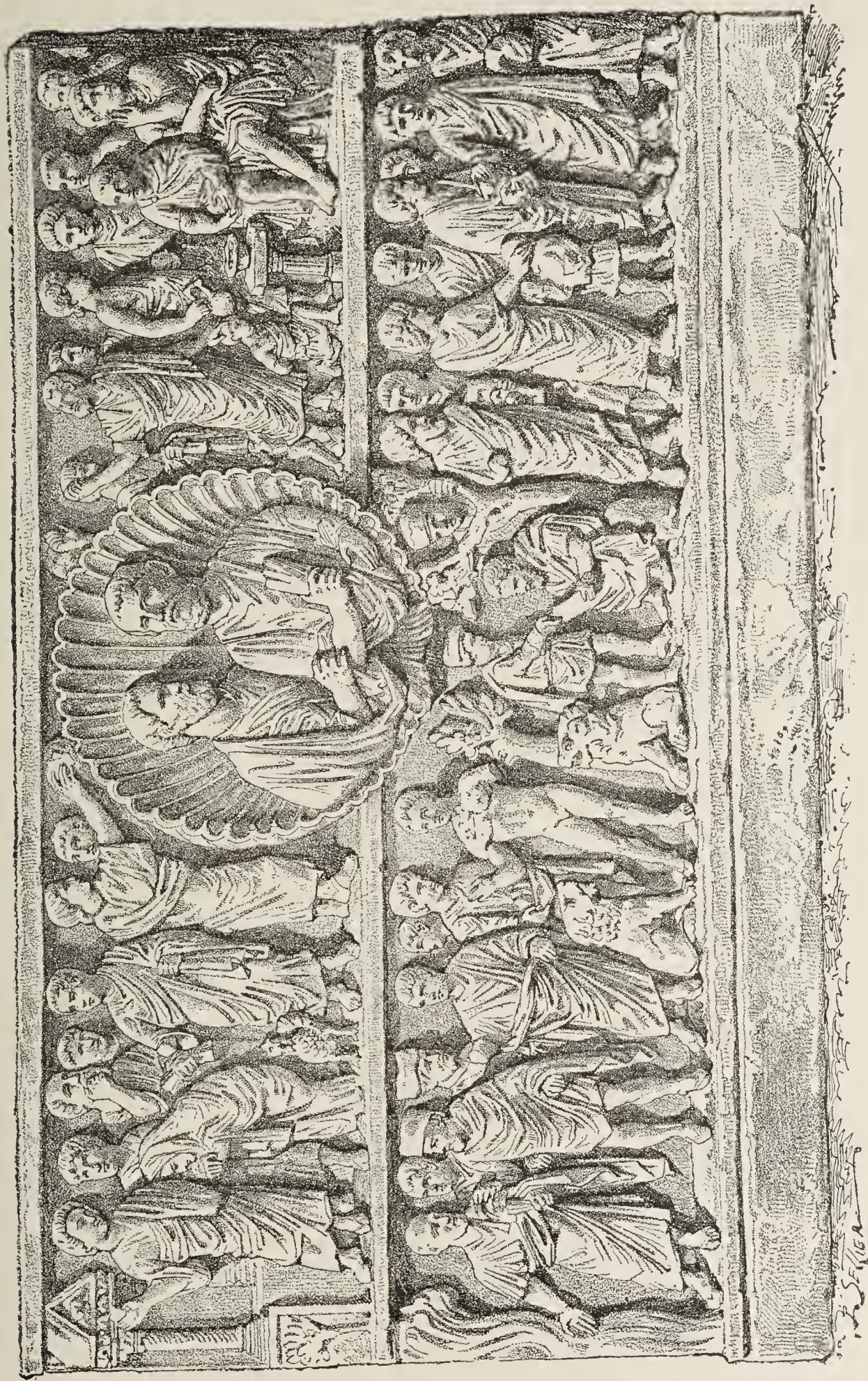
⁴ *Paciscare cum delatore, vel milite, vel furunculo aliquo praesida* (Tertullian, *De Fuga*, 12). Churches obtained immunity from disturbance by payment of a sum of money; "in which," says Peter of Alexandria (*Can.* 12), "they displayed more attachment to Jesus Christ than to their money; carrying out the precept of Scripture: 'The ransom of a man's life is his riches'" (*Prov.* xiii. 8; cf. Tillemont, *Hist. des Emp.* iii. 104). He says in addition: *Iis qui pecuniam*

and letters of ransom were numerous.¹ Indeed, Jesus himself had retired at the approach of his enemies, "because his hour was not yet come;" and he had said to his disciples: "And when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next." These words have become the doctrine of the Church.

We admire the holy enthusiasm "of the soldiers of Christ,"—these sacrifices which are the highest honor of human nature; and we know that martyrs make causes to triumph. History must take great account of this singular condition of men's minds, because it explains the approaching revolutions; but it is also the duty of history to note, as one of the important facts in human annals, the rise in the Western world of a new spirit, whose influence still endures, and has impelled so many holy men to break with the duties of social life. After persecutions had ceased, this exclusive love of heaven continued to make earth unattractive, and withdrew from the period to which they belonged, great multitudes of men who by remaining in it would have aided in rendering its life more pure. Before Constantine, this spirit makes martyrs; after him, it will make monks, occupied at first with their own salvation, afterwards with that of others, and destined to be organized as powerful communities in the bosom of civil society, in order to lead and dominate it. Without the monastic institution, which

dederunt . . . crimen intendi non potest (ibid. apud Labbe, Concil. i. 955; cf. Fleury, Hist. éccles. ii. 51, and Le Blant, Polyeucte et le zèle téméraire, in the Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr. vol. xxviii. 2d part).

¹ "The bishops," says Fleury (*ibid.* ii. 86), "approved this conduct." Not all; but the usage was certainly common, for Tertullian, with his customary vigor, attacks (*De Fuga*, 12) "those who purchase by tribute the right to be Christians," and Saint Cyprian, in his letter to Antonianus, bishop of Numidia, enumerating the various "lapses," expresses the opinion that the least culpable is that of a Christian who, having had occasion to procure for himself a letter of ransom, goes to the magistrate, or sends another in his place, and says: "Being a Christian, it is not permitted to me to sacrifice unto idols; but I give money not to do it." *Is cui libellus acceptus est dicit . . . cum occasio libelli fuisset oblata . . . ad magistratum veni . . . dare me hoc premium ne quod non licet faciam* (Cyprian, *Ep.* 53, *ad Ant.*; édit. Baluze). He often speaks of the *libellatici* (see *ibid.*, index, at this word). By these letters, in which there seems to have been quite a traffic, the Christians acknowledged that they had sacrificed to the gods, although they had not done so, or the judge declared that those who had obtained them should no longer be disturbed (Lambert, *Rem. sur les œuvres de Saint Cyprien*, p. 353), which reminds us of the French cards of citizenship during the Reign of Terror. In both cases, toleranee was purchased by payment of money. This was not a tribute similar to the didrachma of the Jews under the Romans, and the *haratch* of the Greeks under the Mohammedans; the government had imposed no tax on the Christians: *Nihil nobis Caesar indixit in hunc modum stipendiariae sectae* (Tertullian, *De Fuga*, 12). It was an extortion of the magistrates, which the government connived at. This ransom, being in fact a penalty, appeared to satisfy the law and dispense with shedding the blood of inoffensive men.



SARCOPHAGUS IN ALTO-RELIEVO IN THE MUSEUM OF THE LATERAN, FOUND AT S. PAOLO FUORI LE MURA
 (ROLLER, PLATE LXV. PAGE 281). SEE PAGE 67, NOTE 1.

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grows out of the idea which the martyrs followed, the Church would not have become a persecutor in its turn; at least it would not have been so with the same perseverance.

To the survivors of exile, of prison, of tortures, a sanctity was accorded which impelled some of them to usurp episcopal functions, by giving letters of communion to *lapsi*; that is, to brethren who had denied their faith. There were at Carthage and Rome great debates on this subject, to which the Letters of Saint Cyprian bear testimony. It was the beginning of a poetical and dangerous doctrine, that of indulgences founded on the merits of saints.

In the case of the confessors whom the magistrates had not spared, their death being for the faithful a cause of edification and of just pride, the hagiographers of later ages strangely multiplied their number. The murder, for instance, of the nine thousand Lyonnese, slaughtered with their bishop, Saint Irenaeus, by the legions of Severus, and the rivers of blood which flow through the city,¹ form a legend which even those who would be most disposed to swell the number of the martyrs do not venture to accept. The wise Tillemont does not mention them, nor does he seem any more certain that Pope Victor suffered martyrdom at Rome,² or that Severus put to death Saint Andaeolus by ordering his head to be cleft into four parts with a wooden sword; and the manner in which he quotes the *Acts* of Saint Felicitas and of her seven sons—a legend copied from that of the seven Maccabaeian brothers—indicates, under his prudent reserve, doubts which are justified by the strange details given by the martyrologist.³

The friendship which unites the interlocutors in the dialogue of Minucius shows that Christians and pagans could live on very good terms with each other; and many governors, seeing, like Seneca's brother and like Festus, with the utmost indifference practices which did not endanger the public order, favored the

¹ . . . *Et per plateas flumina currerent de sanguine* (Greg. of Tours, i. 27).

² Fleury (*Hist. écll.* i. 522) makes him die a natural death; and this is the conclusion to be drawn from chap. xxiv. of Saint Jerome, in his *De Vir. illustr.*, devoted to Saint Victor.

³ Like Tillemont, the Chevalier de Rossi places the martyrdom of Saint Felicitas and of her seven sons under Marcus Aurelius. M. Aubé (*Hist. des perséc.* pp. 438 *et seq.*) combats this opinion; at most, he would consent to date back the punishment of Felicitas to the reign of Severus. But the reasons which he gives do not allow him to accept the authenticity of these *Acts*. I therefore dismiss this legend from the reign of Severus, as M. Aubé has dismissed it from the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

trade in letters of ransom. Tertullian mentions some who, gentle by nature and sceptics in religion, repudiated the obligation to put innocent beings to death, and determined to go back to Rome "without a spot of blood on their fasces."¹ Asper declared openly that he was disinclined to prosecutions of that kind. When he had to judge a Christian, he only feigned to put him to the torture, was satisfied with the slightest word, and set him free without compelling him to offer sacrifice. Severus furnished them the reply which permitted him to discharge them. A Christian is brought before Pudens with a letter of accusation: he tears up the letter, sets the captive at liberty, and declares that he will not receive an accusation except when the accuser appears personally at the tribunal, in conformity with the law. Candidus treated them as contentious persons, and sent them back to their towns with these words: "Go, and be at peace with your fellow-citizens." "Unhappy men," said another to them, "if you are resolved to perish, are there not ropes or precipices enough for you?" and he drives them from his tribunal. The governor of Syria opens to Peregrinus the doors of the prison, "knowing him to be foolish enough to be willing to die through vainglory."² On one occasion, in Africa, where Severus was proconsular legate, the populace clamored for the death of several Christians, members of the senate of Carthage; but he resisted the outcries of the infuriated mob.³ Later, when Emperor, he recalled Antipater, a governor of

¹ *Ad Scap.* 4. A Christian magistrate, Studius, possessing the *jus gladii*, asked Saint Ambrose if it was contrary to the faith to put to death guilty persons; the saint answered: *Scio plerosque gentilium gloriari solitos, quod incruentam de administratione provinciali securim revexerint* (*Epist.* xxv. sec. 3).

² Tertullian, *Ad Scap.* 5; Lucian, *Peregr.* 14. This is the person who burned himself at Olympia. He had been a Christian, and was at that time regarded as a martyr. The account of Lucian at once proves the fellowship of the Christians and the tolerance of the magistrates, who allowed the faithful to attend their imprisoned brethren day and night.

³ Tertullian, *ibid.* 4, and Fleury, *Hist. écc.* vi. 32. Tertullian relates (*De Cor. Mil.* i.) that on one occasion, when by order of the Emperor largesses were distributed in camp to the soldiers, who according to custom came to receive them wearing a laurel-wreath on their heads, one presented himself holding his wreath in his hand. At first his comrades pointed at him, then ridiculed him, and finally grew indignant. The clamor reaches the tribune. "Why do you not do as the others?" said he to the soldier. "I cannot," he answered; "I am a Christian." It was a breach of discipline and a refusal of obedience. The soldier was sent to prison. "He there awaits," says Tertullian, "Christ's largess" (*donativum Christi*). Had the persecution been violent, this heroic bravado would have been immediately punished by a military execution. Notice that the Christians of Carthage blamed the soldier, but that Tertullian commends him, and proposes him as a model.

Bithynia who appeared to him too ready to employ the sword,¹ very probably against the Christians. The recall of a governor was an extreme and unusual measure: in this case the act was the more significant, as Antipater had been one of the Emperor's ministers. Unfortunately, Severus could not see or hear everything; and the law, defied by Christians eager for martyrdom, or too scrupulously obeyed by heartless magistrates, sent to execution men whose only crime was that they worshipped God in a different way from their persecutors.

It is a Jewish reply to the maledictions of Christians: "You hate us for having condemned Jesus? What would become of you if we had not condemned him?" We might also repeat the words of Tertullian, and say: "Would the Christian soil have been so fruitful if the blood of the martyrs had not watered it?" Two verities which by no means efface the stain imprinted by the death of the just, or rather, which show the sad necessities imposed on man by evil institutions. In Judæa, public authority and religious power were in the same hands.² Pagan Rome also suffered from their union, the Middle Ages from their rivalry: in one case, there were cruel persecutions; in the other, sanguinary wars,—everywhere and always death sown broadcast in the name of Him who made life. At no one of these epochs did men know liberty of conscience, which separates Church and State without arming the one against the other. Blessed be they who have given it unto us!

¹ . . . δόξας δὲ ἐτοιμότερον χρῆσθαι τῷ ξίφει τὴν ἀρχὴν παρελύθη (Philost., *Vit. Soph.* ii. 24).

² According to Leviticus (xxiv. 16), the blasphemer is stoned, and all the people take part in his execution. This is harsher than the *crimen majestatis* of the Romans.

³ Roller, pl. xliii. No. 3.



GOOD SHEPHERD DIVIDING THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS.³

CHAPTER XCII.

CARACALLA, MACRINUS, AND ELAGABALUS (211-222 A.D.).

I.—CARACALLA (FEB. 2, 211—APRIL 8, 217); RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP ACCORDED TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE EMPIRE.

SEVERUS has long occupied our attention, and it is with good reason that we have thus minutely studied the history of his reign. We shall pass rapidly over his successors until we again find rulers and events worthy to detain us.



PHILADELPHIA.¹

The father of Caracalla had done everything to maintain fraternal affection between his sons. He recommended it to them by wise counsels and by his own good example; and furthermore, he urged the Senate and the people to remind the young princes repeatedly of the necessity of it. Each year there was celebrated throughout the Empire "the festival of brotherly love," *philadelphia*; ² the Senate by solemn sacrifices besought the gods to maintain it, ³ and Severus caused medals to be struck, representing his two sons about to clasp hands, with these words as legend: *Perpetua concordia*.⁴ It is said that during his last illness he sent to them the discourse which Sallust places in the mouth of the dying Micipsa, exhort-



CONCORDIA
AUGUSTORUM.⁵

¹ Coin of Perinthus struck under Septimius Severus, with the legend, ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΕΙΑ ΠΕΡΙΝΘΙΩΝ ΝΕΟΚΟΡΩΝ, around the urn of Games placed upon a table and bearing the word: ΠΥΘΙΑ, the Pythian games. Large bronze.

² Especially in the Hellenic East. Eckhel, vii. 231; Mionnet, vol. iv. p. 128, No. 179. M. Dumont (*Éphébie attique*, i. 299) thinks that the Φιλαδέλφεια were constituted for Marcus Aurelius and Verus, perhaps even earlier.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 1.

⁴ Eckhel, vii. 231. A bronze of Severus has also for a legend: *Concordia Augustorum*; another of Geta bears: *Concordiae aeternae*; this was the official mark.

⁵ Caracalla and Geta sacrificing on a tripod. Bronze coin of G.

ing his sons to union. The truth is that the Emperor himself, and all the world with him, were aware of the mistake he had committed in styling them both *Augusti*, when one had not over



CARACALLA IN YOUTH.¹

the other the ascendancy of age and authority that Marcus Aurelius had had over Verus. These equal rights, granted² to young men hardly past the age of boyhood,³ promised the Empire a tragedy; it

¹ Bust of the Campana Museum, found in the ruins of the Circus Maximus (Henry d'Escamps, *op. cit.* No. 105).

² Except that of Pontifex Maximus, which was not divisible. Moreover, from the first, Caracalla conducted himself as if he alone had the authority (Dion, lxxvii. 1), and Geta had scarcely more than the imperial honors.

Caracalla, born April 4, 188, had not yet completed his twenty-third year; Geta, born 27, 189, was only twenty-two. The name *Caracalla*, or *Caracallus* (Dion, lxxviii. 3), came to him from a Gallic garment, the *caracalla*, a sort of tunic with a hood, distributed by him among the common people of Rome and his own soldiers, and later adopted by the

occurred after a few months. Herodian shows them at Rome dividing between them the soldiers and the palace; making of the latter two strongholds in which they fortify themselves against



GETA, CLOTHED IN THE PALUDAMENTUM.¹

each other, and finally proposing to divide the Empire: Asia to Geta, the rest to his brother, —each with half of the Senate, of the armies, and of the fleets. “But will you also divide your mother?” Julia said to them. Dion makes no mention of such a project, the announcement of which would have produced in Rome, where our historian was at that time, a profound sensation. The idea of establishing two Roman empires could not have occurred to the statesmen of that time; but it is curious that it should have originated in the head of a rhet-

orician, who, not finding the history of the family of Severus sensational enough utilized all the processes of the schools to render it suitably dramatic.

Caracalla made use of more simple means. Enticing his brother

hermits of the Thebaid as their costume. His real name was Bassianus. Severus substituted for it that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, which the coins and the inscriptions of monuments give him. He was appointed Caesar in 196, pontiff in 197, Augustus in 198, consul, at sixteen, in 202. In the inscriptions his name is usually written *Aurelius*. Cf. *C. I. L.* ii. 1,114.

¹ Museum of the Louvre. Bust of corallite marble found at Gabii in a perfect state of preservation. The busts of Geta are very rare, Caracalla having commanded that the statue of his brother should be destroyed (*Monum. Gab.* No. 4, and *Clarac*, No. 97).

into Julia's apartment, under pretext of a reconciliation, he slew him in the arms of their mother, who was covered with blood and herself wounded; he then hastened to the camp of the praetorians to secure an asylum by purchasing that venal band. He told them he had just escaped death through the protection of his gods, and a large sum of money paid them the price of blood.

Since it was the custom to represent the victim as a would-be assassin, Geta was declared a public enemy, and his name was effaced from all the monuments, even from the Arch of Septimius Severus, on which traces of it are yet to be seen. It was a crime to mention his name, even in the comedies, — where it had been customary that it should be borne by a slave, — and even in wills. If a legacy had been made to an old servant so named, the dead man himself indeed escaped Caracalla's wrath, but his fortune was confiscated.



THE ARCH OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

Dion tells of the terrible dreams in which Geta appeared to the fratricide, threatening, with sword in hand; also in which he hears his father cry out to him: "I will kill thee as thou hast killed thy brother!" But as Caracalla consecrated in the temple of Serapis the sword which had served him for the accomplishment of the crime, we have reason to think that he carried the remembrance of it very lightly (February, 212).¹

To the Senate, Caracalla justified himself by citing the example of Romulus, and no one took the pains to contradict the old legend. At the end of his speech the young Emperor declared that he recalled all those in exile. It was a promise of clemency; but on the morrow the friends of Geta perished in great numbers.² The soldiers were let loose; in slaying they found pleasure and profit, for they pillaged the houses of the condemned and even of other

¹ The apotheosis of Geta, which Caracalla is said to have had pronounced, has been imagined to furnish occasion for a play upon words: *sit divus non sit vivus* (Spart., *Geta*, 2). No document taken from inscriptions or coins justifies the assertion of Spartianus. Cf. Eckhel, vii. 234. The interpretation given by Mommsen of inscription No. 1,464 of the *C. I. L.* vol. iii. does not seem well founded.

² Dion (lxxvii. 4) goes so far as to speak of twenty thousand Caesarians and soldiers, partisans of Geta, murdered in the palace.

persons. From the house of Cilo, formerly prefect of Rome, whom Caracalla styled his father, and whom he saved from their hands, they carried off gold, silver-plate, clothing, and furniture. Availing themselves of the terror which they inspired, they took ransoms, and exacted payment for sparing the innocent. They killed in behalf of the Emperor, and also on their own account. It appears that Caracalla abandoned to them the praetorian prefects. One of these was Papinian, whom an ancient writer calls "the asylum of law and the treasury of juristic wisdom,"¹ and whom Cujas regarded



BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.³

as "the greatest jurisconsult who has ever been or who ever will be."² It is said that Papinian had enraged the Emperor by refusing to dishonor himself, as Seneca had done under Nero, by an apology for the murder. If the story is true, — and there are reasons for admitting it, — it was a noble death; the great jurisconsult was himself a martyr to duty.⁴ His son and the son of Pertinax, a grand-

son of Marcus Aurelius, a daughter of that Emperor, who had dared to lament the death of Geta, a nephew of Severus, a Thrasea, and many others met the same fate. Dion made the list of the senatorial victims; it has been lost, but we know that it was long: the first crime necessarily involved many others.

With this Emperor, of base and wicked nature, "who," says a contemporary, "never loved any one,"⁵ the reign of Commodus was repeated: the same orgies at the palace, the same massacres of men and wild beasts at the circus, the same insults to the Senate, the same exactions under myriad forms. It is probable that, like so many other Emperors who came into power young, he had intermittent attacks of insanity.

We know, in fact, that Caracalla was diseased in mind as well

¹ Spart., *Sev.* 21.

² *In prooemio ad Quaest. Papin.*

³ Aesculapius and Telesphorus, upon a medium bronze of Caracalla. (PM. TR. P. XVIII COS. IIII PP. SC.)

⁴ Spartianus (*Car.* 8) and Aur. Victor (*De Caes.* xx.) reject this story, saying that it was not among the duties of the praetorian prefect to compose a discourse for the Emperor. Doubtless; but Papinian was a relative of the imperial family, and, besides, enjoyed a high reputation: the apology which Caracalla demanded of him would certainly have produced a great effect in the interest of the murderer.

⁵ Dion, lxxvii. 11.

as in body; the many coins of his which are in existence, with the image of “the healing gods,” attest his efforts to rid himself of some secret malady.¹ He loved to cause fear, and studied to give himself a fierce air, which his busts have preserved: men flattered him most when they trembled before him. A man of consular rank having said to him that he seemed at all times

CARACALLA.²

to be in a rage, he took it for a compliment, and sent him a million sesterces.³ In the Senate he was always praising Sylla, so harsh towards the Conscript Fathers of the Republic, or extolling his own compatriot Hannibal, so terrible to Rome.⁴ And he did indeed give them cause to tremble, for he organized a

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 15; Eckhel, vii. 212 *et seq.*

² Bust of the Museum of Naples.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 11.

⁴ Herod. iv. 14.

vast system of espionage, by means of the soldiers who were employed in keeping order in the city. Through fear lest some officer by inopportune severity might discourage their zeal, he reserved to himself the cognizance of complaints preferred against them, and a decision as to the disciplinary penalties which they might incur. He protected these men of whom he had made eyes to see and ears to hear, even when there was nothing either to be seen or to be heard.¹ Accordingly, every one was at the mercy of these agents of low degree, who were assured of impunity, and whose denunciation cost fortune or life.



LARGE BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.²

When he did not take life or property by sentence of death or of confiscation, he ruined by capricious exactions. "He placed us under contribution," relates Dion, "for the provisions which he distributed to the soldiers or sold to them like a tavern-keeper. When he left Rome we had to prepare for him, at our expense, sumptuous lodgings along the route, even for the shortest journeys, and sometimes in places where he was not to pass.

In the cities where it was supposed he would remain some time, it was circuses and amphitheatres that we were obliged to construct. In all this he had but one purpose,—to ruin us; he often repeated: 'No one but myself ought to have money, so that I may give it all to my soldiers.' He was accustomed to notify us that at daybreak he would administer justice or attend to public affairs, and then keep us waiting until after mid-day, sometimes even until night, without so much as receiving us under his vestibule." And while the *illustrissimi* awaited a look, a word from the master, he was driving in chariot-races, fighting with gladiators, drinking to excess, or mixing wine in bowls to send out to the soldiers of his guard in full cups, which the senators, parched with thirst and the heat of the sun, could not detain on their passage.³ "Sometimes," adds Dion, "he administered justice;" and Philostratus reproduces one of these audiences,

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 17.

² The Circus Maximus, on a large bronze of Caracalla. (SPQR. OPTIMO PRINCIPI SC.)

³ *Id.*, *ibid.*

which assuredly lacks gravity, but at which the Emperor, this time, at least, did not lack good sense.¹

This profligate wished, like Domitian, to assume the character of an austere reformer. He punished adultery with death, although the law did not exact this severity; and he caused four vestal virgins to be buried alive, asserting that they had violated their vow. One of them, whom he himself had attempted to seduce, cried out on her way to punishment: "Caesar well knows that I am still a virgin."²

This time tyranny was not of profit to the provinces; they had to suffer exactions of every kind,—in the form of "voluntary gifts," new taxes, old ones augmented, perhaps the coinage of base money to pay the Emperor's debts.³ Caracalla doubled the fees for manumissions, legacies, and donations, abolished inheritances *ab intestato* and the immunities granted in these cases to near relatives of the deceased; and finally, he declared all the inhabitants of the Empire citizens.⁴ Some have seen in this rescript a great measure of equity, or at any rate the completion of the revolution begun by Caesar; but in reality it was a fiscal expedient. The *peregrini* continued to pay their former contributions, and they were henceforth subject to the tributes which the *cives* had been accustomed to pay in the place of the land-tax and

¹ *Vitae Soph.* ii. 30. The Sophist Philiseus claimed, by virtue of being a professor in the University of Athens, *vacationem a publicis muneribus*. Caracalla terminated the discussion by saying, as was just: *Nolim ob breves atque miseras oratiunculas civitates privare munera praestituris*, τῶν λειτουργησόντων. But another day he did the contrary, granting the *vacatio munerum* to Philostratus of Lemnos for a declamation. (*Ibid.*)

² Dion, who reports these words, yet supposes her guilty (lxxvii. 16).

³ There certainly were great monetary changes under Caracalla. We know that he reduced the *aureus* from $\frac{1}{45}$ to $\frac{1}{50}$ of the pound of gold, making it only equal in intrinsic value to 22.56 silver denarii, instead of to 25.08, as hitherto, and that he first issued in enormous quantities the *argenteus Antoninianus*,—debased coin; that is, copper with a mixture of silver. The *Antoninianus*, which with its normal weight of silver should have been worth more than the denarius,—about $21\frac{1}{2}$ cts.,—soon came to be only silvered copper. This adulteration doubtless began under Caracalla, for Dion (*ibid.* 14) formally accuses this Emperor of having issued coins of silvered lead and gilded copper; several medals, which give to Alexander Severus the title of *restitutor monetae*, indicate a reform which justifies the statement of Dion. There is, besides, in the collection of Vienna, a plated *aureus* of Caracalla (Eckhel, i. 115). The obligation to pay the taxes in gold also dates probably from this time; at least, it appears established under Elagabalus (*Hist. Aug., Alex.* 38). The $\frac{1}{20}$ upon enfranchisement had moreover always been paid in this manner, *aurum vicesimarium* (Livy, xxvii. 10).

⁴ *In orbe Romano qui sunt, ex const. imp. Antonin. cives romani effecti sunt* (Ulpian, in the *Digest*, i. 5, 17; *Novell. Justin.* lxxviii. 5).

the capitation.¹ This reform, which extended to all the provinces the benefit of the Roman laws, and consequently the right of appeal to the Emperor, did not affect the former distinctions,—as free and federated cities, Latin colonies, and those with the *jus Italicum*, etc., which subsisted long after. Caracalla himself made new ones, granting the *jus Italicum* to the inhabitants of Antioch and Emesa.² One of these long-existing distinctions was however effaced: he admitted Alexandrians into the Roman Senate, which had up to that time been closed against them.

Néither was the status of the individual modified by this measure. The condition of the slave, the colonist, the freedman, the foreigner established in the Empire or enrolled in its auxiliary troops, remained the same;³ there were merely additional imposts and a new class of *peregrini*. But a long list of citizens gained an advantage by the decree of Caracalla. The custom of gratuitous distributions was extended to all the cities possessing the right of Roman citizenship. They made it a point of honor to imitate the charitable institution of the metropolis, and we find, even in Palmyra, which became an Italic colony, tesserae for the distribution of grain.⁴ When all the inhabitants of the Empire were citizens, the poor of the provincial cities participated also in the benefit of the public aid. Saint Augustine sees only this result of the edict, and it seems to him a very happy one. “This was,” says he, “an excellent and very humane measure, for it enabled the common people, destitute of land, to obtain supplies furnished by the common fund.”⁵ When Maximin took possession of the municipal

¹ That is to say, one twentieth of the manumissions, legacies, and donations (Dion, lxxix. 9, and this work, Vol. IV. pp. 101 and 159). Nor had the provincials been subjected to the provisions of the laws concerning inheritances; he took away the *caduca* from the public treasury, *aerarium*, to assign them to the *fiscus*, or treasury of the Emperor: *Omnia caduca fisco vindicantur, servato jure antiquo liberis et parentibus* (Ulpian, *Reg.* xvii. 2).

² *Digest*, l. 15.

³ Diocletian gave later, in 298, the right of citizenship to sons of veterans born of foreign mothers, *peregrini juris feminas* (*C. I. L.* iii. 900). The *dedititii*, the Junian Latins, those whom a legal sentence deprived of the right of citizenship, foreigners established, willingly or by compulsion, in the Empire or serving in its troops, perhaps the inhabitants of countries united to the Empire after Caracalla,—these formed a new class of *peregrini*, placed between the *cives* and the *barbari*. Cf. Aecarias, *Précis de droit romain*, i. 94.

⁴ See Vol. VI. pp. 114 and 519 the proof of the extension of this custom.

⁵ . . . *Gratissime atque humanissime factum est, ut . . . plebs illa, quae suos agros non haberet, de publico viveret* (*De Civit. Dei*, v. 17).

funds, it is noticed that he seized even the money that served to pay for the distributions of grain.¹

Some of the jurisconsults who wrote, "Food must be given to the poor," doubtless foresaw that the decree would have this merit; but not so Caracalla, — though, like his father, he was very liberal in the distribution of provisions. The determining motive for him was the fiscal reason; for his need of money was extreme. The immense treasure left by Severus had been quickly dissipated. "There is nothing more left," the prudent Julia said to him as she vainly attempted to control these prodigalities; "fairly or unfairly, all our revenues are exhausted."

"Courage, mother; while we have this, money shall not be lacking:" as he spoke, he laid his hand upon his sword.

His own was not to be greatly feared, but he had the swords of his soldiers. Severus had held the troops in restraint; his son gave them loose rein, acting upon the maxim attributed to his father: "Make the soldiers content, and laugh at the rest." His innumerable victims had left behind them relatives and friends who might avenge them. All, therefore, were enemies, except those to whom he said: "It is for you that I reign; my treasures are yours."

And they might well believe it, seeing themselves daily gorged with gold. Their yearly pay was increased seventy millions of drachmas,³ which the ordinary revenues of the state were no longer sufficient to pay. He adopted another measure, disastrous



CAMEO OF CARACALLA.²

¹ Herod., vii. 3.

² Caracalla crowned with laurel and wearing the aegis. Cameo No. 251 of the *Cabinet de France*. Sardonyx of three layers, 48 mill. by 38. Portrait bearing very slight resemblance.

³ Dion, lxxviii. 36; cf. lxxvii. 24, where the figures for the augmentation of the ἀθλα τῆς στρατείας are probably inverted.

to discipline. The legions had been accustomed to live in camp the whole year under tents; he allowed them to take up their winter quarters in the neighboring cities,¹ which they treated as conquered territory, ruining their hosts, and themselves losing, in a life of debauchery, what military virtues remained to them.

There is one thing which the mere mercenary, the soldier without a country, such as the Roman soldier had now become, loves as well as he loves gold; namely, war,—that intoxicating game of life and death in which he always hopes to win: the license of an army on a campaign delights him, and the glutting of brutal passions, disguised by a show of glory. Caracalla had promised to lead his soldiers to this chase of men and booty. “I wish to die in war,” he said; “it is a noble death;”³ and he had continually on his lips a name which the Greeks had long placed above the most famous names of Rome,—that of Alexander. In the time of Polybius, his compatriots were wont to avenge themselves for their recent defeat by saying to the Romans: “It is to Fortune that you owe your successes; Alexander owed his to his genius.” Later, they again repeated:

GOLD MEDAL.²SILVER MEDAL.⁴

“The Parthians, whom you have been unable to vanquish, were but the least of the peoples subjugated by him.” Accordingly the remembrance of the hero of the Hellenic race had haunted the minds of Caesar and of Trajan. These great captains desired to follow in the track of Alexander, to establish their legionaries in the cities built by his veterans on the banks of the Oxus, feeling that they should make the Roman Empire complete only when they gave it for its Eastern limit the same which the empire of Alexander had had. But

MEDAL OF ALEXANDER.⁵

as the old spirit of Rome gave way before the advancing encroachments of Hellenism, the great Macedonian ceased to be a rival and became a fellow-citizen, whose fame now formed part of the

¹ lxxviii. 3.² Alexander the Great; talismanic gold medal.³ Dion, lxxvii. 3.⁴ Talismanic silver medal with the name of Alexander, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.⁵ Medal of Alexander on a sword-belt, and serving for a talisman (*Dic. des Antiq.* fig. 314).



TREASURE FROM TARSIS

Gold Coins of Alexander, Phillip II., and Hercules, engraved during the reign of Alexander Severus

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national fame. He was raised to a place of honor, he came to be a god; and the formidable soldier was transformed into a beneficent genius who warded off disastrous influences, ἀλεξίκακος. Medals of gold and silver, stamped with his effigy, served as talismans. "They protect," says a writer of the *Augustan History*,¹ "in every act of their lives, the men who wear them." Severus assumed the name of Alexander. Caracalla did more,—he declared that the soul of the hero had passed into his own;² and to prove this, he trained war-elephants and organized a Macedonian phalanx.³ The latter creation, however, was less a passion for imitation than the completion of a reform begun long before. Instead of regular armies to be encountered with scientific tactics, the Romans now had to repulse the impetuous attacks of unorganized Barbarians and the fleet horsemen of Parthia. Before the elephants and the phalanx of Pyrrhus⁴ the Romans had abandoned their old order of battle in close ranks and dense columns. Their adversaries changing, they resumed it, so that individual impetuosity might dash against an impenetrable mass. This reform had begun during the wars in Britain;⁵ later, Arrian⁶ clearly lays down the principle of the formation in phalanx of eight men deep without interval, with a ninth line of archers, the cavalry and military engines being in the rear and on the wings, which was hereafter the order of battle of the legions.

Near the close of the year 212, Caracalla went to Gaul. He caused the governor of Gallia Narbonensis to be put to death, and disturbed these provinces by violating some municipal rights,—perhaps in case of those cities which refused the onerous gift of the *jus civitatis*. A serious malady, and doubtless also a desire to inspect the defences of the Rhine, detained him north of the Alps. In February, 213, he was again in his capital,⁷ which he now saw for the last time.

He had promised his soldiers expeditions, and the Empire had

¹ *Tyr. trig.* 14.

² Dion, lxxvii. 7–8. He was called φιλαλεξανδρότατος.

³ [Neither of which ever won a victory for Alexander. — ED.]

⁴ This change was before the time of Pyrrhus; but the new organization was consolidated and improved in this war. See, in our first volume (pp. 369 *et seq.*), the reforms of Camillus and the creation of the legion.

⁵ Under Paulinus and Agricola (Tac., *Agric.* 35; Dion, lxii. 8). ⁶ In 136, *Acies*, 15.

⁷ We have in the *Code* (vii. 16, 2) a rescript dated Rome, February 5, 213; but there may be an error in this date. Cf. Eckhel, vii. 210, 211.

need to strike some blow in the direction of the Danube and the Rhine, where powerful confederations were forming, which we shall mention later. One of these, that of the Alemanni, — who now appear for the first time in history, — surprised an entrance through the fortified line which covered the *agri Decumates*, and a large body of cavalry carried fire and sword into this outpost of Italy and Gaul. Before the end of 213¹ Caracalla led his troops against the invaders and vanquished them on the banks of the Mein, where their women repeated the acts of heroic ferocity which Plutarch attributes to the women of the Cimbri, — unless the story of Xiphilinus be a classical reminiscence. Other successes in the direction of Rhaetia are also mentioned. The Osrhoenian archers, who formed part of the Roman army, had the honor of the campaign, — which leads us to suppose that the enemy were neither very numerous nor very formidable.² However, the report of these victories resounded afar; peoples established at the mouths of the

CARACALLA GERMANICUS.⁴

Elbe and on the North Sea sent deputations to the Emperor to request his friendship and also subsidies, which he granted them.³ The Alemanni, rendered prudent by their defeat, remained quiet for twenty years. Dion accuses the Emperor of having thus purchased peace from the Germans. We have repeatedly explained that it was good policy to win over the Barbarian chiefs by presents, in order to avoid sudden irruptions and the useless wars which they entailed. There is then no occasion to blame Caracalla for having pursued this course, — at least if he did not purchase peace too dearly.⁵ It enabled him to levy among the

¹ At least we possess coins of this year on which he bears the name of Germanicus (see above, and Eckhel, vii. 210, 222; cf. Or.-Henzen, No. 5,507).

² These archers, unknown to the ancient legions, assumed daily more importance in the army, where a certain number of soldiers of this kind were necessary; for General de Reffye has demonstrated that an arrow still has good effect at 130 and 140 yards. It was not a weapon with which a battle might be won, but it was a missile very useful at certain moments of the engagement.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 14.

⁴ ANTONINVS PIVS AVG. GERM., around the head of Caracalla wreathed with laurel. On the reverse, Serapis standing, and the legend: P. M. TR. P. XXI COS. IIII PP. Coin of silver; Cohen, No. 143. For the name of Antoninus assumed by Caracalla, see above, p. 75, note 3.

⁵ Macrinus — his murderer, it is true — accuses him of having dispensed as much in pensions to the Barbarians as for the pay of the army; but this is absurd (Dion, lxxviii. 17).

Alemanni auxiliary corps, one of which formed his body-guard. We should even be reduced to praising his conduct towards the army, if we did not see in it an unworthy effort to gain popularity. He shared all the fatigues of his soldiers. If there were a ditch to be dug, a bridge to be built, any specially laborious work to be done, he was the first to set the example. He had the commonest food served up for him, and ate and drank from wooden bowls; he shared the coarse bread of the troops; frequently he ground his own wheat, made the loaf of bread, and placed it in the oven. He dressed like the poorest soldiers: hence they called him their comrade; and he was extremely proud of this. He rarely was carried in a litter, or rode on horseback; he marched fully armed, and sometimes carrying the ensigns laden with ornaments of gold, which were a heavy burden even to the most robust centurions.¹ Hadrian, marching with bare head in front of his legions, is still the commanding officer; Caracalla, preparing his own food, is merely grotesque, and destroys discipline by losing the respect of his soldiers.

A TEMPEST.²

Historians of the time further speak of Barbarians treacherously massacred, of a king of the Quadi whom the Emperor caused to be put to death, of a war which, following the wish of Tacitus, he kindled between the Vandals and the Marcomanni, of successes against the Sarmatians in Dacia, and against the Goths, whose name now appears for the first time.³ There is much obscurity

¹ Herod., iv. 7. Dion agrees with him.

² From the Vergil of the Vatican.

³ These were the advance-guard of the Gothic nation, which was at this time approaching from the Euxine, but had not yet arrived, — unless we ought to understand these Goths of Caracalla to be Getae who inhabited both shores of the Danube. Dion (lxvii. 6) gives this name to the unsubjected Dacians.

about all this, but it reveals an intention to protect the northern frontier of the Empire. "After having reorganized the army of the Danube," says Herodian, "he passed into Thrace, and there made numerous regulations for the cities," as he had already done in Gaul, and as he did later in Asia. What the regulations were, we have no knowledge; but the fact is to be noted, for, being doubtless conceived in a spirit contrary to local liberties, they must have hastened the hour when these liberties disappeared.

He crossed the Hellespont, — narrowly escaping shipwreck in a tempest, — and repaired to Pergamus, to obtain from Aesculapius the cure of the unknown malady from which he suffered. He submitted to all the prescriptions then in use for wonderful cures. A miracle in this case would have been of importance and of excellent profit; but it could not be effected by ordinary procedures: the Emperor was too conspicuous a patient. The god turned a deaf ear, and Caracalla was not healed.¹ At Troy he crowned the tomb of Achilles with flowers, and desired himself to have a Patroclus. His freedman Festus was chosen to play the

dangerous part of friend to the hero. The new Patroclus died a few days later, — which gave the Emperor an opportunity to repeat the funeral scenes described by Homer; and it is credibly asserted that Festus had been poisoned for the purpose.

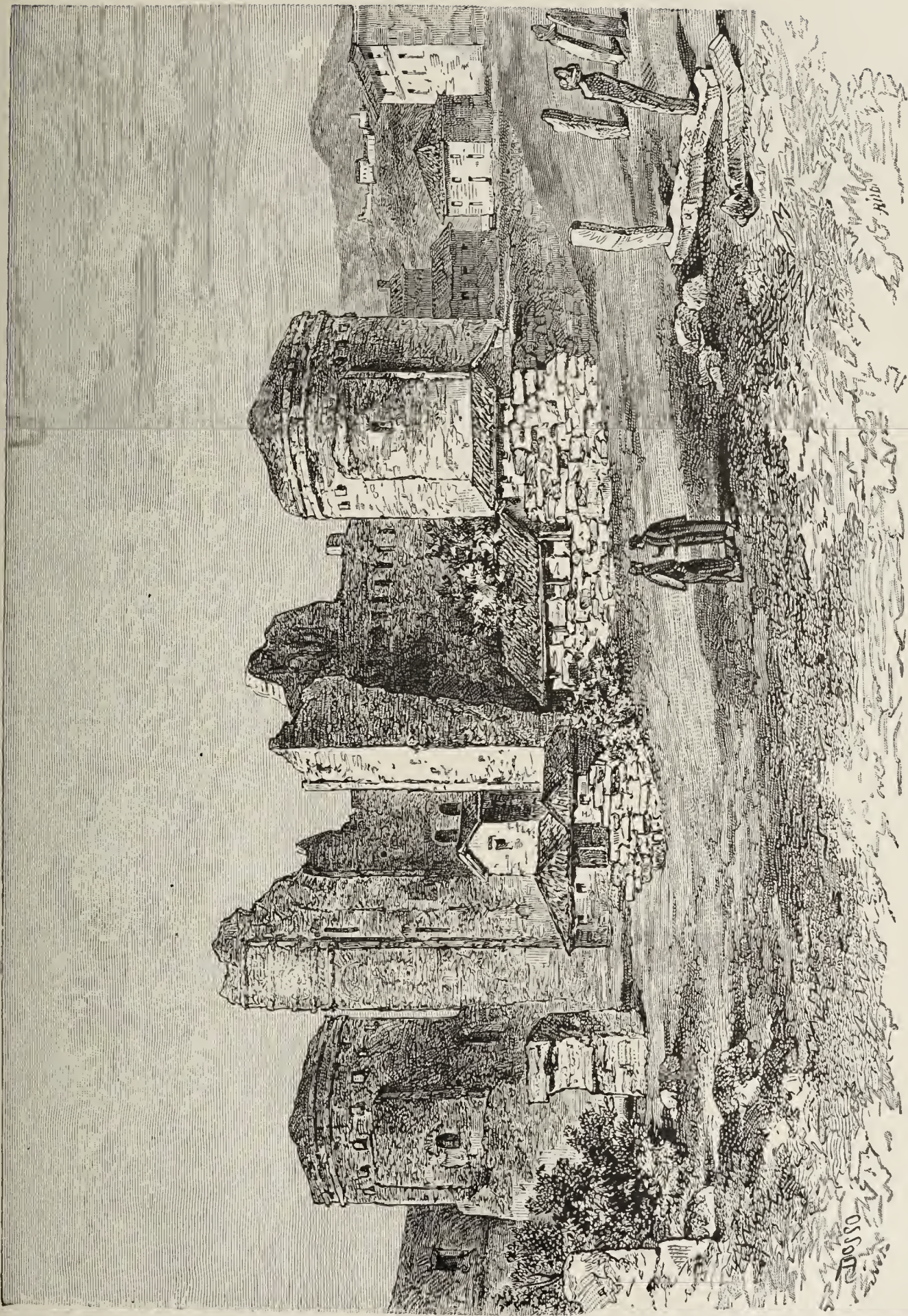


COIN OF PERGAMUS.²

Caracalla passed the winter of 214–215 at Nicomedeia, where Dion, our principal guide at this point, was with him. The Parthians were at this time wasting in internal feuds the last remnant of their national life, and the occasion was propitious for attacking them. He arrogantly claimed from them two refugees, whom they immediately gave up; and this docility deprived him for the moment of all pretext for war. However, victories were necessary to him. The king of Osrhoene governed his country for the

¹ At this visit, Pergamus at least gained great privileges, which Macrinus revoked. Texier finds in all Asia Minor the ruins of only two amphitheatres, — at Cyzicus and Pergamus (vol. ii. p. 227). The amphitheatre at Pergamus is very small, — 184 by 121 feet. The waters of the stream which flows across it could be stopped for nautical games, crocodile combats, or nymphs playing on marine shells, as Martial indicates (*De Spectac.* 26).

² Coin of Pergamus, with the effigies of Aesculapius, Hygieia, and Telesphorus.



RUINS OF THE BASILICA (?) OF PERGAMUS (TEXIER, ASIE MINEURE, VOL. II. PL. 117).

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benefit of Rome. Edessa, its principal city, situated on the caravan-road, at the foot of a cliff which bore the acropolis, and from which issued an abundant supply of water, was and still is an important strategic point, the centre of defence for Upper Mesopotamia. It is possible, but not certain, that this king had entered into compromising relations with the Persians. Along that remote frontier friendships were fluctuating. Caracalla resolved to destroy this tributary state: he persuaded the king to come to him, cast him into prison, and made a Roman colony of his capital. The affair was insignificant, but the deposition of an Oriental king always occasioned more clamor than a like event in the West; moreover, Abgarus probably had a well-filled treasury.¹ Caracalla employed the same method of procedure with respect to the king of Armenia, then at variance with his son. He invited them to choose him as arbiter; and when they had come, he treated them as he had the king of Osrhoene. But the Armenians were not so easily captured as their monarch had been; they made a determined resistance, and destroyed a Roman army sent against them.

The senators, whom Caracalla reproached for their idleness, while he was exposing himself in their behalf to fatigues and dangers, naturally applauded these lofty exploits. The surname "Parthicus" was decreed to him, and the acclamations in his honor always ended by the wish that his reign might endure a hundred years. For all that, he still felt himself to be hated, and wrote to them from Antioch: "I know that my exploits are displeasing to you; but I have arms and soldiers, so I am not disturbed by what you think."

He had come to Antioch in search of pleasures;² in Alexandria, where he arrived at the end of the autumn of 215,³ he sought for vengeance. The Alexandrians — a frivolous and jeering race —

¹ This kingdom must have been re-established, for we afterwards find kings at Edessa. The deposed dynasties sometimes re-appeared in the high offices of Rome. A descendant of Herod was proconsul of Asia about 135, and a Julius Antiochus, of the royal race of Commagene, was consul and one of the Arval Brothers (*Bull. de corr. Hellén.*, 1882, p. 291). At the other extremity of the Empire, the country of the Gallaeci and the Asturians was separated, in 215, from Hispania Citerior. This was merely a dismemberment of a province (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 2,661).

² *Antiochenses colonos fecit salvis tributis* (*Digest.* l. 15, 8, sec. 5). He granted to them, as also to the Byzantines, *jura vetusta* (*Spart., Car.* 1).

³ Eckhel, iii. 215.

gave to Julia the surname of Jocasta, her son's incestuous spouse, the mother of two hostile brothers; they called Caracalla "the very great Getic" (*maximus Geticus*), — a cutting allusion to an exploit which had not been accomplished in the country of the Getae; and they laughed at this ugly man, undersized and bald, old before his time, who assumed to copy the great heroes, Achilles and Alexander. All this was reported to the Emperor. When he approached the

CARACALLA AS AN APPLE-SELLER.¹CARACALLA AS A WARRIOR.¹

city the most prominent citizens went forth to meet him, bearing in their hands the sacred objects, as if their gods wished to do honor to the new god who was coming. Caracalla received them well: he made them sit at his table; then, in contempt of the old and sacred laws of hospitality, at the termination of the feast ordered them to be put to death. During the execution his troops seized their arms and rushed into the city. The squares, the principal streets, the chief edifices, were quickly occupied by them; the Emperor himself took his station in the temple of Serapis, and thence directed the massacre. The slaughter continued

¹ Grotesque statuettes of the Museum of Avignon (Ch. Lenormant, *Nouveaux Mémoires*).

through many days, without distinction of age, condition, or sex. The number of the victims must have been immense, for Alexandria was an ant-hill of men, and also an opulent city, where the soldier struck at random and found pillage everywhere. The temples even, those sacred banks in which private persons often deposited their riches, were not spared. The carnage ceased only when, sated with blood and booty, the murderers dropped their swords.

In announcing this exploit to the Senate, "the Ausonian monster" said: "As to the quantity and quality of those who have perished, it matters little, for they all merited the same fate."¹ The public conscience was perhaps secretly indignant; but officially the senators commemorated this new species of victory by a coin representing the Emperor trampling Egypt under his feet.

Caracalla then resumed his schemes of conquest (216). He sent to ask from the Parthian king the hand of his daughter; and on his refusal, crossed the Tigris, captured Arbela, where he flung to the winds the ashes of the kings, and ravaged a part of Media. The enemy, taken by surprise, offered no resistance. After this easy success the Emperor returned



LARGE BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.²



COIN OF
CARACALLA.³

to Mesopotamia and went into winter quarters in Edessa, there to consult the oracle of the god Lunus; but while seeking the future, he lost the present: on his way to Carrhae he was slain by one of those very men whose appetites he had pampered, — a soldier discontented because he had not been appointed centurion. The murder occurred April 8, 217, when Caracalla was barely twenty-nine years old.⁴

The Romans had divinities whom they called *Dirae*, "the

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 22, whom I follow always in preference to Herodian.

² PM. TR. P. XVIII IMP. III COS. IIII PP. SC. Caracalla trampling under foot a crocodile, symbol of Egypt, and receiving two ears of corn from the hands of Africa (Cohen, No. 474).

³ Coin commemorative of the victory of Caracalla over the Parthians (*Victoria Parthica Maxima*). *Aureus* struck in the year 217.

⁴ Zosimus does not believe that Caracalla was killed by Macrinus; "the author of his death," he says, "was never known." Herodian (iv. 12) gives us to understand that there was a conspiracy among the chiefs of the army, and Spartianus affirms it (*Carac.* 6).

Terrible Ones," — avenging powers which always exist for monarchs, since expiation surely follows great crimes, and finally overtakes either those who have committed them, or their posterity.

Julia Domna was then at Antioch. Up to Caracalla's last hour she had exercised supreme authority; but she had also endured supreme anguish. For a quarter of a century the Roman world had been at her feet; then, her husband being dead, one of her



THE GOD LUNUS.¹

sons had been murdered by the other; and now the murderer had also fallen under the blows of an assassin, involving in his downfall the ruin of his house. Too proud to endure the condition of a subject under an adventurer whom her family had raised from nothing, and to become, after so much grandeur, the object of public pity, she resolved to escape from her distress like a Stoic of ancient days. Moreover, she suffered from a malady perhaps incurable; death was approaching her: she went to meet it, and allowed herself to die of starvation.²

Caracalla had constructed at Rome a portico on which were engraved the exploits of his father, and Baths which are, after the Colosseum, the grandest ruin in Rome, and one of the largest in the world.³ A colonnade, 4,750 feet in length, formed an inclosure, within which were gardens with trees, lawns, and flowers, and a stadium for gymnastic exercises, which Roman hygiene prescribed after the bath. The *thermae* themselves — an edifice 750 feet long by 500 in width — contained a theatre, halls for declamation or study, courts with porticos, museums, and libraries; finally, an immense reservoir, surrounded with sixteen hundred seats of sculp-

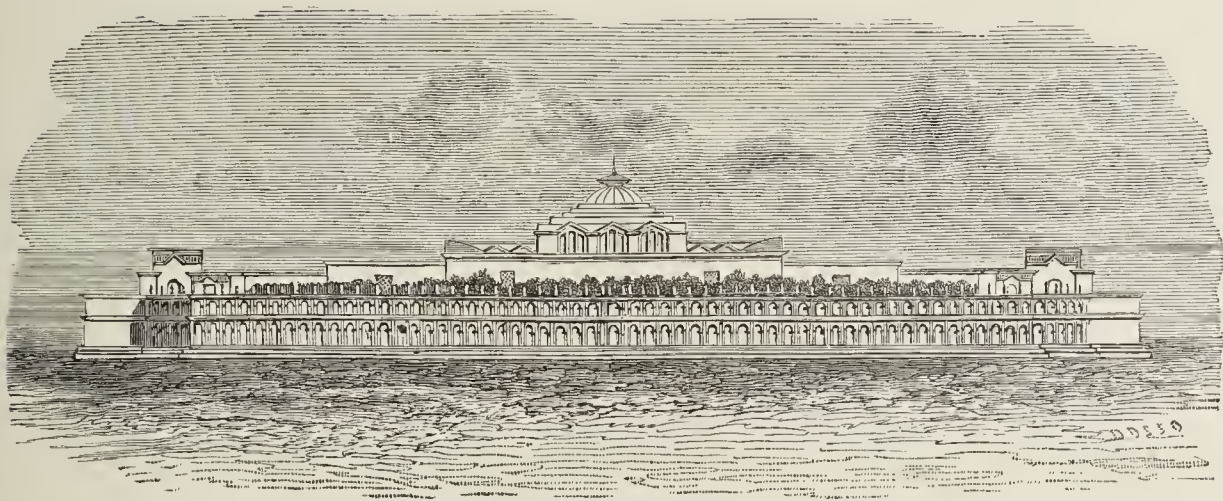
¹ Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,033.

² According to Herodian (iv. 13) she killed herself through despair, or in obedience to a secret order.

³ He had not time to complete these *thermae*; the external colonnade was constructed by Elagabalus, and completed by Alexander Severus (Lampridius, *Heliog.* 17, and *Alex.* 25). On the *thermae* of the Romans, see Vol. IV. p. 354

CARACALLA OFFERING TO MARS A VICTORY.¹

tured marble, where three thousand persons could bathe at once. In the centre of this colossal construction rose the *cella Soliaris*, covered with a low dome.² Everywhere were the choicest

THERMAE OF CARACALLA.³

marbles, the most beautiful mosaics, and the masterpieces of art. From it have been taken the Hercules of Glycon, the Flora, and the

¹ Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,103 (agate, 20 mill. by 27). Caracalla seated, half nude, like Jupiter, holds in one hand a horn of plenty, and with the other presents a Victory to a statue of Mars. On the exergue: MAR(ti) VIC(tori). (Chabouillet, *op. cit.* p. 274.)

² [It has been shown by Mr. Middleton, in his *Ancient Rome in 1885*, that this roof was no arch, but a solid mass of concrete, cast in this shape, and laid on like a metal lid. — ED.]

³ Restoration by Blouet (*École des Beaux-Arts*).

magnificent group of Dirce, known under the name of the Farnese Bull. A single column from these *thermae* made a sufficient decoration for the square *della Santa Trinità* at Florence, and the Museum of Naples is filled with sculptures brought from these



FRAGMENT OF MOSAIC FROM THE THERMAE OF CARACALLA (CASING OF THE UPPER STORY).

ruins,—the last and supreme effort of Roman art. Spartianus remarks that the street leading to the Baths of Caracalla, which was also constructed by this Emperor, was the finest in Rome.

In Syria, he had continued the works begun by his father; at



INTERIOR OF A HALL OF THE THERMAE OF CARACALLA : PRESENT CONDITION.

The Library
of the
University of Illinois.

Baalbec, the great vestibule and the *temenos* of the temple of Jupiter were built by him.

These works of art will not, however, save his memory. He had scarcely reigned six years, and this short time had been sufficient to do irreparable damage. Under Commodus, Pertinax, and



FLORA, CALLED THE FLORA FARNESE.¹

Julianus, the soldiery had been insolent; under Caracalla the army actually took possession of the Empire. Accustomed to see this Emperor defer in everything to their caprices, they desired that this *régime*, which was so profitable to them, should endure; and to this end made choice of Emperors who would not be able to change it.

¹ Colossal statue found in the Thermae of Caracalla.

II. — MACRINUS (APRIL 12, 217 — JUNE 8, 218); ELAGABALUS
(JUNE 8, 218 — MARCH 11, 222).

MACRINUS (Marcus Opellius Macrinus) was an African, like Severus, and a native of Caesarea, the Cherchel of the French colony in Algiers. He was of humble origin. It was said that he had been a slave and a gladiator; we know that he was procurator of the property of Plautianus, and that he barely escaped perishing with him. Severus was favorably disposed towards this confidential agent of his old friend, making him superintendent of the post-service of the Flaminian Way. Caracalla, forgetting who had been his first protector, appointed him advocate of the treasury, and later, praetorian prefect. Macrinus was a mild and just man, without talent or ambition, who would never have dreamed of empire, had not a letter denouncing himself fallen into his hands.¹ To escape certain death, he caused the Emperor to be slain; and his accomplice having been instantly cut down by



DIADUMENIANUS ANTONINUS. CAESAR AND
PRINCE OF THE YOUTH.³

the guards, the part which Macrinus had played in the murder was not at first discovered. He affected great sorrow, which won the soldiers; on the fourth day he was proclaimed emperor, being as yet a mere knight.² Thus we see how everything is

becoming debased, even the imperial dignity. His son Diadumenianus, then in his ninth year, was made Caesar and Prince of the Youth (April 12, 217).⁴

¹ Capitolinus is very much opposed to him; but Dion, his contemporary, says too much in his favor out of hatred to Caracalla (lxxviii. 40). Herodian speaks also of his severity (v. 2).

² Herodian (v. 1) and Dion (lxxviii. 14). He had, however, received the consular ornaments (Dion, *ibid.* 13, (which had assured him the title of *clarissimus* (Or.-Henzen, No. 5,512). Cf. Lampridius, *Alex.* 21.

³ M. OPEL. ANTONINVS DIADV MENIANVS CAES., around the head of the young prince. On the reverse, PRINC. JVVENTVTIS S.C., Diadumenianus standing, holding an ensign and a sceptre. At his left, two ensigns.

⁴ Lampridius (*Diad.* 2) has preserved these words of Macrinus, showing that to the ordinary *donativum* were added promotions, which redoubled the interest that the soldiers

Macrinus did not dare to have Caracalla declared a public enemy. The ashes of the late Emperor were borne secretly to the tomb of the Antonines; and that his images might disappear quietly, a decree sent to the mint all the statues of silver and gold. But he received divine honors. A temple and pontiffs were consecrated to him. The soldiers would not have suffered their favorite Emperor to be deprived of an apotheosis.

As the conqueror of Niger had assumed to continue the house of the Antonines, so Macrinus wished to attach himself to the African dynasty, — without, however, claiming all the inheritance. He took the name of Severus, and gave to Diadumenianus that of Antoninus, which Caracalla had borne. This was by way of flattery to the multitude, — always so easily captivated by words and appearances, to use an expression of Horace.¹ Macrinus now applied himself to gaining the general favor: that of the Senate by manifestations of respect; of the soldiers by money; of the people by the suppression of recent imposts. He also endeavored to satisfy the public conscience by the recall of the proscribed and the punishment of informers. But all this was done in a petty way, and nowhere was felt the firm hand of a man capable of imposing his will.



APOTHEOSIS OF
CARACALLA.²



REVERSE OF A COIN
OF MACRINUS.³

The king of the Parthians had invaded Mesopotamia with a large army. Macrinus, obliged to lead against him troops lacking in discipline, and without ardor for this war, met with repulses, which the enemy were not able, however, to turn into defeats. The Romans, masters of the cities and of numerous strongholds, in which they had had time to collect all the provisions, left the plain to the enemy's cavalry, who could not subsist there. The two monarchs soon wearied of a struggle in which neither of

had in multiplying the vacancies of the throne and the imperial adoptions: *Habete, commilitones, pro imperio ternos, pro Antonini nomine aureos quinos et solitas promotiones, sed geminatas.*

¹ . . . *Qui stupet in titulis et imaginibus* (Sat. I. vi. 17).

² CONSECRATIO. S. C. Caracalla in a four-horse chariot, on a funeral pile of three stories. (Large bronze struck after the death of Caracalla; Cohen, No. 396.)

³ PONTIF. MAX. TR. P. II COS. PP. S. C. Felicitas standing, holding a caduceus and a horn of plenty. (Large bronze; Cohen, No. 92.)

them was heartily engaged. Macrinus, besides, was in haste to return to Rome; he made humble proposals, released the prisoners, and gave fifteen million drachmas, with which Artabanus was satisfied.¹ He again humiliated himself before the Armenians, restored

DIADUMENIANUS.²

to their king Tiridates his mother, whom Caracalla had retained in captivity, the lands which the late king had possessed in Cappadocia, and probably gave him a pension, in consideration of which the Armenian agreed to receive a gold crown from Macrinus as a sign of the Emperor's suzerainty. In Dacia their hostages were

¹ Dion, lxxviii. 27.

² The cuirass and the cloak of this marble bust are of alabaster (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 57).

also returned to the Barbarians. Under Caracalla, the Empire had maintained, at least in the face of the enemy, the proud attitude which Severus had given it.

The success of the Roman arms was not, however, the less celebrated on account of these events. The coins were like an official journal of the time, and quite as unreliable as certain bulletins of victories. One of them, which the Senate ordered to be struck, bore the words: *Victoria Parthica*.¹

Macrinus undertook, however, to draw closer the bonds of discipline, so lax under Caracalla; and while leaving to the veterans the increase of pay, the rewards and exemptions from service which had been lavished upon them, he attempted to subject the recruits to the regulations of Severus,² and treated them all with extreme severity. A victor might have done this with success; an Emperor who had been half-conquered, and had just been obliged to purchase a peace, was incapable of imposing this reform. The war had called many troops into Syria: he made the mistake of keeping



MACRINUS.³

¹ Eckhel, vii. 258.

² Dion, lxxviii. 28. According to Capitolinus (*Macr.* 12), he condemned adulterers to be burned (*junctis corporibus*), and fugitive slaves to fight as gladiators. Informers, if they failed to prove the accusation, forfeited their heads; if they proved it, they were branded with infamy, after having received the sum which the law allowed them. He condemned soldiers to the cross, or had other servile punishments inflicted upon them; and he often "decimated" them. I doubt whether he was capable of so much energy. Yet Herodian (v. 2) confirms the words of Capitolinus.

³ Heroic statue (in the Vatican) of Greek marble which has preserved its antique head (*Museo Pio Clem.* vol. iii. pl. 12).

them there. These inactive soldiers, their minds still full of the memories of the great expeditions of Severus, began to reckon up the profits that had accrued to them from the victories of the father and the largesses of the son, and to make, between what

MACRINUS.¹

was and what had been, that comparison which malecontents always turn to the disadvantage of the present. Macrinus had written to the Conscript Fathers that he intended to do nothing without them;² that is to say, that he proposed to give back to the Senate

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 55.

² In the letter which Macrinus wrote to the Senate to announce the revolt of Elagabalus, he complained of the insatiable greed of the soldiers, and of the impossibility of providing, with the ordinary revenues of the state, for their pay at the rate to which Caracalla had raised it.

that central position in the Empire which the late Emperor had given to the army. It would have been wise for Macrinus to do this silently; especially important was it for him to send back to their respective garrisons the legions which were useless in the pacified East, and, above all things, not to pass his own time in Antioch gazing at dancers and listening to buffoons. Soon complaints were openly made in the camps of the parsimony of the new Emperor,—of this civilian who kept the soldier in his tent, while but lately cities had been his quarters. Men spoke of the millions given up to the Parthians as of property taken from the legions; and they finally came to believe that the real murderer of the Emperor who had been so dear to the army was no other than Macrinus.

After the death of Julia Domna, Macrinus had relegated to Emesa the sister of that Empress, Maesa, with her two daughters, Soaemias, mother of Avitus Bassianus (afterwards notorious under the name of Elagabalus), and Mamaea, whose son, born in an old Canaanite city, where the Venus of Libanus was adored,¹ had taken, from a temple of that city consecrated to Alexander, the name of the Macedonian hero. It seems that these Syrian women, who were very intelligent, had made advantageous marriages, by taking husbands who were both old and wealthy; at least, the two were already widows, and rich. They had also made skilful use of their imperial connections; and, in 217, what remained of the family of the priest Bassianus, three women and two children,² were now united near the Temple of the Sun. This sanctuary, in great veneration throughout all Syria, possessed the right of asylum;³ it afforded shelter for their wealth and their persons. Macrinus, a timorous usurper, lacking the audacity which sometimes renders usurpation successful, left in the hands of his enemies all this gold,—a sure means, in such a time, to bring about a revolution. Another imprudence was that of sending a legion into camp in the vicinity of this treasure, to which Maesa and her daughters had the key, and near a city which, owing to Caracalla



JULIA MAESA
(GOLD COIN).

¹ *Arca Caesarea* or *Cesarea Libanis*. Cf. Belley, *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* xxxii. 685 *et seq.*

² Soaemias had had a second son (Orelli, No. 946, and Boeckh, *C. I. G.* No. 6,627).

³ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 2.

the title and privileges of an Italic colony, venerated his memory and his race.¹

The three women, without counsellors, without support, undertook, in their remote Syrian city, to overthrow an Emperor; and they did overthrow him.

They had consecrated the elder of the boys to the priesthood of the god of Emesa,—an office hereditary in the family of Bassianus; they had caused him to be circumcised, for the purpose of conforming with the custom of the country, and had forbidden him to eat pork. They themselves also produced an effect on the minds of the people by devotion either feigned or sincere. An inscription gives to Maesa the title of “very holy;”² coins of Soaemias represent her in the character of the Venus Celestia;³ and Mamaea, through religious curiosity and political sagacity, had entered into correspondence with Origen.⁴ There were many Christians and Jews in this region whom these advances might win, without alarming the pagans. Then, as to-day, these sensuous and impressionable populations suffered themselves to be deceived by the outward appearance of sanctity. In the East

there have always been marabouts, who make use of religion for political ends. The three women assigned this part to the boy in whom were centred their affections and their hopes.



ELAGABALUS. ON A COIN OF TRALLIS.⁷

Varius Avitus Bassianus, better known under the name of his god Elagabalus,⁵ was then in his fourteenth year.⁶ He had that statuesque beauty which the Greeks regarded as a gift from the gods; and when, clad in a purple robe embroidered with gold, his head encircled with a crown of precious stones whose iridescence sparkled like a luminous aureole about his

¹ *Digest*, l. 15. 1. sect. 4.

² *Sanctissima* (Henzen, No. 5,515).

³ Eckhel, vii. 265. See Vol. VI. p. 552, a statue of Soaemias, *Venus Celestia*.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 21. We must not in this fact see a leaning towards Christianity, for all the coins of Mamaea are pagan.

⁵ The name Elagabalus is never found on coins, any more than that of Caligula or Caracalla. These surnames have passed into history from the mouth of the people. His official name was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

⁶ Herod., v. 3. Lampridius assigns him three years more (and the same to Alexander Severus); but Dion represents him as being yet a child, *παιδίον* (lxxviii. 36 and 38), and makes him die at the age of eighteen (lxxix. 20).

⁷ Large bronze, the reverse of which we have given in Vol. IV. p. 211.

brow, he went up to the temple to perform the sacred rites, the crowd believed they beheld a child of destiny. The soldiers encamped in the suburbs of the city, often came to this renowned sanctuary, and even more than others admired and loved the young priest, whom Severus had cradled upon his knees. Gradually the report spread that Elagabalus was more nearly connected with him who had been the real Emperor of the soldiers. Servants of the palace of Emesa asserted that he was the son of Caracalla;¹ and money distributed, promises made, and hopes held out, easily persuaded men who had an interest in being persuaded. For the success of this intrigue, Maesa sacrificed her gold, Soaemias her honor; but neither of them cared for what they lost. The gold of Maesa was placed at high interest, and Soaemias thought that the mantle of an empress would cover all.² As for the soldiers, they asked nothing better than to give to an effeminate Syrian the Empire of Augustus and Trajan.

One night Elagabalus repaired to the camp of Emesa, followed by wagons which bore the price of the Empire; and when day dawned he was proclaimed. They gave to him the names of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (May 16, 218),—a last tribute to those famous Antonines whose renown was beginning to be magnified by remoteness, and whom the poets of the time ranked above the gods.³

A praetorian prefect, Ulpianus Julianus, happened to be in the vicinity, with a troop of Moorish horsemen whom he believed to be devoted to Macrinus, their compatriot. He hastened to the camp to force its gates; the attack, feebly conducted, was not successful, and a second attempt met the same fate. So much was not needed to make the fidelity of his soldiers waver. When they heard a *cubicularius* of the late Emperor proclaim, in the name of the new, that the property and the rank of the dead man should belong to him who brought to the camp of Emesa the head of a centurion or a tribune; when they saw



THE GOD OF EMESA.

¹ He assumed this title, which is found in the inscriptions: *divi Severi nepos, divi Antonini filius*.

² Lampridius (*Heliog.* 2) accuses Soaemias of having led the life of a courtesan (*meretricis more vixit*).

³ . . . *Antoninos pluris fuisse quam deos* (Lamprid., *Diad.* 7).

their comrades display from the top of the wall the boy whom they called the son of Caracalla, together with the bags of Maesa's



ELAGABALUS.¹

gold, — they slew their officers, and the ensigns of the two armies were united.

On a first report of the prefect, Macrinus had seen in this revolt only an outbreak of women, which he could easily subdue.

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 57.

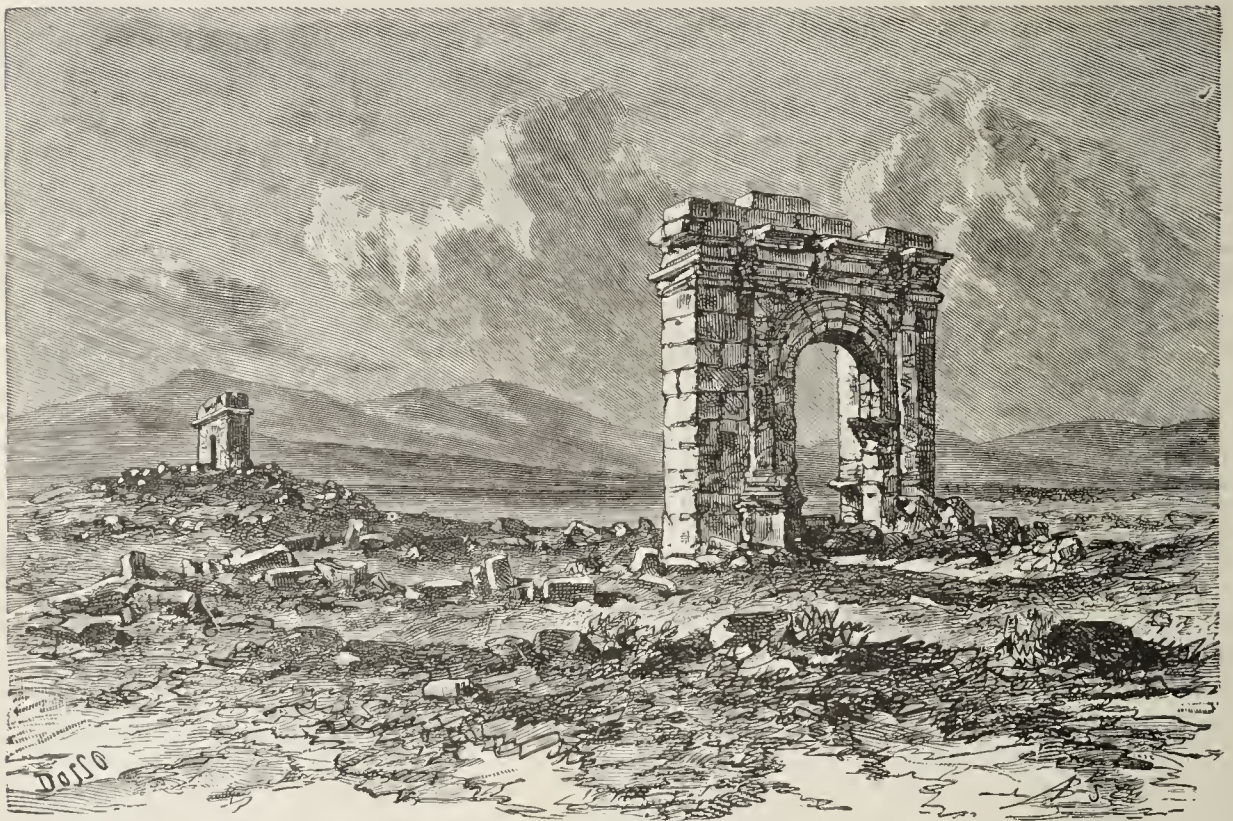
Soon a messenger from the camp of Emesa arrived. "I bring you the head of Elagabalus," he said; and flung down that of Julianus. The sight of this bloody trophy which the rebels had sent him, the audacity of this soldier, who profited by the confusion to make his escape, caused anxiety in the Emperor's heart; and he had recourse to what seemed the great agent of safety with soldiers, — gold. To have an occasion for promising to each legionary five thousand drachmas, of which a thousand were paid on the spot, he conferred the title of Augustus on his son. The letter which announced to the Senate this elevation, promised the Romans a largess of 150 drachmas per head, — from which we see that a soldier was then esteemed to be worth thirty-three times as much as one of the sovereign people. He also re-established all the military regulations of Caracalla.

These largesses, inspired by fear, came too late; every day deserters made their way from all points of Syria, singly or in bands, to the camp of Emesa. The legion of Albano, which was encamped at Apameia, deserted in a body; so that the army of Elagabalus became strong enough to go in pursuit of that of Macrinus. The battle took place on the confines of Syria and Phoenicia; Gannys, the eunuch or servant of Mamaea, who led the soldiers of the young Caesar, was a skilful general. He took up a good position, and Maesa, Soaemias, and even Elagabalus, cast themselves into the fray to inspire their troops. Macrinus, on the contrary, frightened by the tumult and by new defections, fled, leaving his praetorians to maintain valiantly the reputation of the corps; but when they became aware of the cowardice of their chief, and received the promise of Elagabalus that they should preserve their rank and honors, they laid down their arms, and the high-priest of the Sun found himself master of the Roman world. This occurred June 8, 218.¹

Macrinus had sent in advance to Antioch an announcement of victory. When he arrived near that city, he took a certificate of the imperial post, cut off his hair and beard, and in disguise attempted in great haste to escape into Europe by way of

¹ Is it in remembrance of this victory that he founded in Palestine, on the site of Emmaüs, a city of victory, Nicopolis? (Eusebius, *Chron.*, *ad ann.* 224.) He made Emesa a colony possessing the *jus Italicum* (*Digest*, l. 15, 8, sec. 6).

Byzantium. All went well at first, and he had crossed Asia Minor without opposition; when great fatigue and need of money obliged him to stop in a poor dwelling in the outskirts of Chalcedon. A note written by him to an agent of the imperial finances to obtain funds, led to his recognition; he was arrested, and delivered up to the soldiers of Elagabalus, who had followed him all the way from Antioch. Macrinus had charged trusty messengers to conduct his son to the Parthians, his recent allies.



RUINS OF ZANA, THE ANCIENT DIANA.¹

Horsemen overtook the child before he had crossed the Euphrates, and slew him. The news of his death reached his father while he himself was being brought to the conqueror. He threw himself down from his chariot and fractured his shoulder, and the soldiers at once murdered him. He was fifty-four years old, and had not reigned fourteen months.

No monument built by him is known; but an arch of triumph still standing in French Algeria, at Zana, the ancient Diana, was erected in his honor by his compatriots of Mauretania.²

¹ *Revue archéol.*, ninth volume.

² The inscription of the Arch of Zana (*Diana Veteranorum*), constructed directly after his accession, terms him *consul designatus*. Dion, in fact, informs us that Maerinus was not

He had in view, it is said, a revision of the imperial rescripts (which were most frequently only decisions in special cases), with the design of preserving those which were of a general character. It was a laudable intention, but required time for its execution; and this was not granted him.¹



THE GOD OF
EMESA.²

The god of Emesa was represented by a black stone, which no doubt had the same origin as the black stone of Mecca. The terrestrial influence of these two aerolites³ was very different; for we may say that the one brought down from sidereal space a grand idea of religious purity, and the other, the principle of all disorder. The Arabs relate that when creation was complete, God summoned the angels to contemplate the work emanating from his hands. At sight of it the choir of celestial spirits uttered a cry of adoration: "Allah!" This holy word, proclaiming the unity and omnipotence of the Creator, God wrote in the heart of the black stone which Abraham deposited in the Kaaba. At the day of judgment it will open, to disclose to view the divine formula in flaming characters, and to give testimony in behalf of those who have approached it with pure lips and a repentant heart.

This legend is beautiful and grand; it transforms an act of vulgar superstition into a profession of moral and religious faith. The stone of Emesa had more of worldly grandeur, but infinitely less of



ELAGABALUS.⁴

willing, as Plautianus had done (see Vol. VI. p. 82), to reckon the consular ornaments which he had obtained from Caracalla as a first consulship (L. Renier, *Mél. d'épigr.* pp. 185 *et seq.*).

¹ He had also undertaken to continue the alimentary institutions established by Trajan and the Antonines (Lamprid., *Diad.* 2).

² *Aureus* of Uranius Antonius, bearing the black stone richly ornamented and surmounted by a crown with points.

³ "In the temple . . . is to be seen a great stone, rounded at the base and pointed at the top, of conical form and black in color, which they say fell from heaven" (Herod., v. 5).

⁴ Elagabalus in a chariot drawn by two women (cameo of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 253, white jasper, 27 mill. by 21). This monument answers to the text of Lampridius: *Junxit et quaternas mulieres pulcherrimas, et binas ad papillam, vel ternas et amplius, et sic vectatus est: sed plerumque nudus quum illum nudae traherent.* The Greek inscription, *Long live Epixenus* (from ἐπίξενος, intruder), leads us to think that this cameo is a monument of a satirical nature.

virtue. It was the image of the Sun, from which it appeared to have come; and as in all religions the sign is easily confounded with the thing signified, it was venerated like the Sun itself, the author of life, the principle of fecundity and generation, which its worshippers adored by acts analogous to those which it accomplishes in the bosom of Nature.¹

Elagabalus was the most complete representation of the unclean side of this naturalism. Hitherto the tyrants of Rome had at least had something of the Roman character. In the son of Severus there was still a soldier; but the son of Soaemias was purely a Syrian, in whom was united all that the East could produce of lust and shame. His inclinations turned to the most abominable vices, his mind to the wildest aberrations. Hence he has ever remained in the memory of men as the symbol of enthroned infamy. Three things had produced this moral monstrosity, — an impure religion, absolute power, and his own youth.

After his victory, Elagabalus assumed all the imperial titles, without awaiting the usual decree of the Senate, and marched rapidly upon Antioch, which purchased exemption from pillage by the payment of five hundred drachmas to each soldier. Thence were at once despatched letters to the Conscript Fathers, — in which he promised to govern like Marcus Aurelius, — and sentences of death against the governors who had been slow to divine his fortune, against senators who had shown too much zeal in favor of Macrinus, and even against the skilful man who had won for him the battle of Antioch.²

¹ Asia was full of these conical stones. Venus at Paphos, Gaeion at Seleucia (see Vol. IV. p. 313) and at Bosra, were thus represented. These cones, of sidereal origin, symbolized the generative power; the two mountains named Casius, near Antioch and on the frontier of Egypt, owed this name to their pyramidal form (cf. Mionnet, *Séleucide et Piérie*, Nos. 891 *et seq.*, which give bronzes of Trajan representing a cone in a tetrastyle temple, with the legend, *Zeus Kasios*, and De Vogüé, *Inscr. sémitiques*, pp. 103, 104).

² Dion, lxxix. 3, 4. One of the victims of Elagabalus, Valerianus Paetus, was condemned "because he had had images of himself made of gold, for the adornment of his mistresses." I mention this fact to indicate a Roman usage: the first act of an Emperor was to coin gold pieces bearing his effigy. To enroach on this right was treason. Paetus was well aware of this, and doubtless was not as innocent as Dion says. "He was a Galatian," adds the historian, "and was accused of seeking to incite a rebellion in the neighboring province, Cappadocia, and of having with this intent had the coins struck which were the cause of his death." All usurpers began in this way. Amm. Marcellinus (xxvi. 7) relates that the partisans of the usurper Procopius brought about the defection of Illyria by putting in circulation in that province coins with his effigy, as proof that he was indeed the legitimate emperor.

Each one of the shocks which dethroned an Emperor had been succeeded by a period of disorder, shaking the Empire to its foundation, until a firm hand restored its equilibrium. The legions of Macrinus, sent to their camps, pillaged the villages along their route, and many men had visions of the imperial purple. They had just seen a mere knight come to imperial power, and now a boy had attained it. There were therefore no longer laws or ordinances, Senate or Roman people; no longer a powerful aristocracy giving to Rome its Caesars. "At the death of Nero," says Tacitus, "a terrible secret had been revealed; namely, that emperors might be made outside Rome." At the accession of Elagabalus, another secret was made known; namely, that it was not necessary to be the choice of a powerful army, but that a few cohorts and a little popular enthusiasm were sufficient to cause a revolution. Hence many men believed that with sufficient audacity it would be easy to force the gates of the palace. Two legates of legions, even a centurion's son, a worker in wool, and still others¹ attempted in various places to gain the support of the soldiers. A man whose name is unknown went so far as to instigate a mutiny among the crews of the fleet of Cyzicus, while Elagabalus was wintering near there in Nicomedeia. "So many worthless men," says the historian Cassius, "had victoriously trodden the path to power that it had become smoothed for all the adventurers who dared enter upon it." The era of the thirty tyrants was approaching.

In Mount Taurus, Elagabalus had consecrated to his god the temple which Marcus Aurelius had erected in honor of Faustina, and Caracalla later had dedicated to his own divinity. At Nicomedeia the new Emperor had himself painted in his sacerdotal costume. The picture was placed in the Senate at Rome, above the statue of Victory; and each senator was obliged, before taking his seat in the curia, to burn incense before it.² Elagabalus entered Rome wearing a purple robe embroidered with gold, a necklace of pearls, his cheeks painted with vermilion, and the brilliancy of his eyes heightened, like those of an Arab woman, by the use of henna. Maesa and her two daughters had accompanied him thither. United in devising the plot, these three women did not agree as to the advantages to be obtained from its success. Maesa, whose political

¹ Καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ πολλοὶ ἄλλοι (Dion, lxxix. 7).

² Herod., v. 1.

ideas had been formed in the school of Severus, desired decency in conduct and order in expenditure,—unwelcome prudence, to which the boy, intoxicated with power, gave no heed. In the



STATUE OF VICTORY.²

opinion of Soaemias, on the contrary, Elagabalus, being master of all things, human and divine, had no need to restrain himself in anything. Between these two women a division of power was effected in accordance with the taste of each. Public affairs were irksome to the young Emperor, and he abandoned them to his prudent grandmother, on condition that she should not interfere with his pleasures, also giving her a seat in the Senate near the consuls. To his mother he gave the presidency of a senate of women,¹ intrusted with the duty of determining for the matrons their costumes and order of precedence, the quantity of gold and

precious stones that each might wear according to her condition, ornaments of litters and carriages, etc.,—a singular concern for etiquette in this court of parvenus, where the monarch made a display of all vices, broke down the barriers between all ranks, and set a charioteer of the circus above a consul! As to the mother

¹ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 4.

² Museum of the Louvre, No. 435. Statue of Greek marble, apparently celebrating two triumphs by the two crowns which she has, one upon her head, the other in her right hand. A trophy is under her feet.

of Alexander, she kept herself in retirement, and took especial care to withdraw her son from public notice.

The Emperor went on covering himself with infamy; but it should be noticed that although public morality was shamefully outraged, the state did not suffer greatly during this miserable reign.¹ The executions of the first few days, and the fidelity of the legions definitively obtained for the new government, rendered the ambitious prudent. Public agitation subsided; and since the Germans remained quiet, and the Parthians had enough to do to avert impending ruin, the cities of the frontier were at peace like those of the interior.

But at Rome what shame, what exhibitions! Gluttony which would have driven Vitellius to despair, lewdness such as to make Nero blush, scenes of infamy which can only be told in Latin! Elagabalus entered the city attired like a Phoenician priest or Median satrap, bringing with him his shapeless god, the black stone of Emesa, which he honored with barbaric songs, lascivious dances, and immolations of children.² He made it the supreme divinity of the Empire. All Olympus was obliged to humiliate itself before this intruder, whom he solemnly united in marriage with the Astarte of Carthage, giving for a bridal escort to

LARGE BRONZE.³COIN OF EMESA.⁵

these deities the conquered gods, — those to whom for centuries the Romans had attributed their fortune, and who consequently had aided them in acquiring it! Jupiter Capitolinus was reduced to the position of courtier to the Syrian idol,⁴ and the pontifex maximus of Rome became the priest of the Sun-god.⁶

Every year, says Herodian, Elagabalus conducted his god into a new and magnificent temple which he had built for him in one of the suburbs of Rome. The stone was placed on a chariot sparkling

¹ . . . καὶ μηδὲν μέγα κακὸν ἡμῖν φέροντα (Dion, lxxix. 8).

² Lamprid., *Heliog.* 11.

³ Elagabalus, priest of the Sun-god (SACERD. DEI SOLIS ELAGAB. SC.).

⁴ *Omnes deos sui dei ministros esse aiebat* (Lamprid., *Heliog.* 7).

⁵ The conical stone of Elagabalus on a chariot drawn by four horses (SANCT. DEO SOLI ELAGABAL.). Imperial coin of Emesa; Mionnet.

⁶ *Sacerdos dei solis* (Eckhel, vii. 250); in the inscriptions, he joined to his title of Emperor that of priest of Elagabalus (Henzen, Nos. 5,514–15).

with gold and precious stones, drawn by six white horses; and that the idol might appear to drive the chariot himself, no person was seated in it. In front, the Emperor, supported by two guards, ran backwards, in order to keep his eyes ever fixed on the holy image. Behind were borne the statues of all the gods, the imperial ornaments, and the precious furnishings of the palace; the garrison of Rome and the entire populace formed the escort, bearing torches and strewing the way with flowers and wreaths.¹

Dion relates an adventure which took place about the same time near the province of which he was governor: "On the banks of the Ister appeared, I know not how, a genius who resembled in countenance Alexander of Macedon. He traversed Maesia and Thrace after the manner of Bacchus, accompanied by four hundred men armed with thyrsi and clad in goat-skins. They did no harm, and everything was supplied to them, lodging and provisions, at the expense of the cities; for no one dared oppose him in word or action, neither chief, nor soldier, nor procurator, nor governor of provinces: and in open daylight, as he had announced, he advanced in procession as far as Byzantium. Thence, crossing over into Chalcedon, he performed at night certain sacrifices, buried in the ground a wooden horse, and disappeared."²

That these populations, stupefied by gross superstitions, should take for a god the fanatic or the adroit swindler who lived at their expense, makes it easier to understand that other grotesque madman effecting a religious revolution at Rome in favor of his black stone. In the preceding chapter we have seen the noblest men of this age piercing in thought the depths of the sky, there to seek that God who ever keeps from view. The two facts which we have related above show the imagination of the weak-minded, whether princes or people, haunted by kindred visions. Genii, daemons, are everywhere; every religion furnishes them: and the multitude, not knowing which they should honor, pays a common and timorous adoration to them all. It is the popular syncretism, manifesting itself after its own fashion on a lower plane than the syncretism of the philosophers.

"In the temple of his god, where we have already seen all the occupants of the Graeco-Roman Pantheon, he placed also," says

¹ Herod., v. 5.

² Dion, lxxix. 18.

his biographer, "the image of the Great Goddess, the Vestal fire, the Palladium, and the sacred bucklers. He desired to have the rites of the Jews and the Samaritans observed there, and even the ceremonies of Christianity; so that the priests of Elagabalus might possess the secret of all religions."¹



IVLIA AQVILIA SEVERA AVG[VSTA].²

This secret the Christians believed that they possessed; and seeing them oppose to this religious anarchy the unity of their belief and the discipline

of their churches, we feel that the hour of their triumph is coming. The just loathing inspired by the high-priest of Emesa must not, however, prevent us from recognizing that in the midst of these unclean festivals an important fact lay concealed. The worship of the black stone did not accord with the Roman genius, which the Greeks had rendered exacting in respect to the plastic representation of the gods; but the monotheistic idea which this stone represented became a very Roman one. The worship of the Sun assumes more and more importance; for it was of all the pagan cults the most rational. We shall see that the Sun was the great god of Aurelian and of the Constantinian family. The most contemptible of Emperors ac-



JULIA CORNELIA PAULA.³

cordingly plays, without suspecting it, a part in the religious

¹ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 4.

² Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.

³ Bust of Parian marble, *Museum of the Louvre*.

disintegration of Roman society. This profligate madman had also in his way the intoxication of the divine. He is the representative of that confused medley of beliefs whence faith in the one God was even then beginning to emerge. This confusion will be

ANNIA FAUSTINA.¹

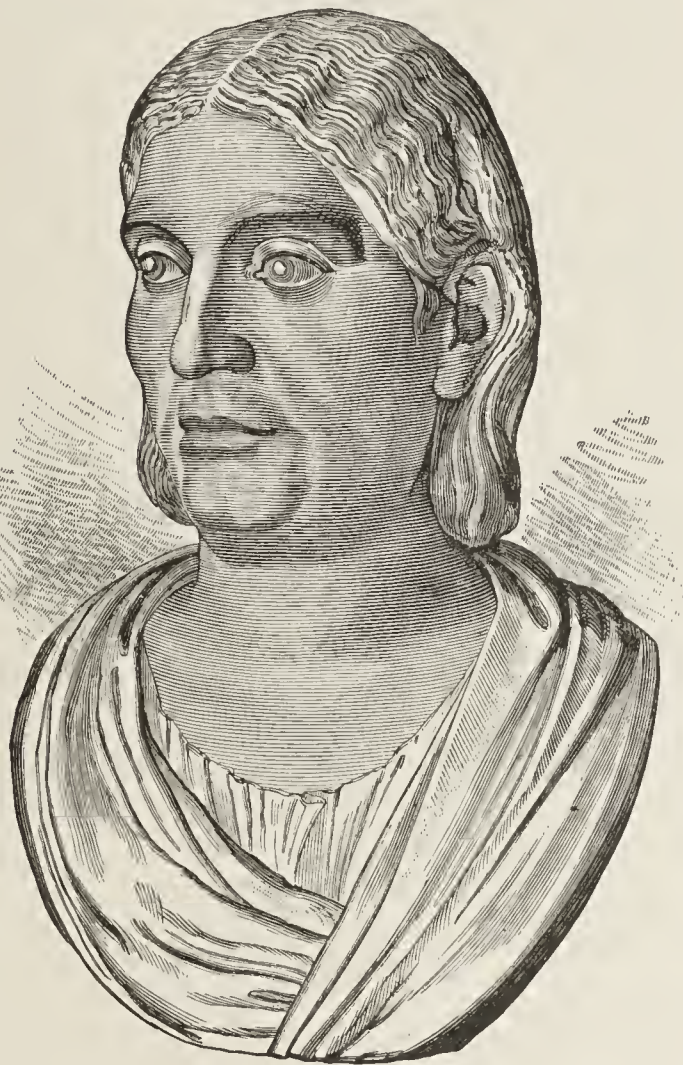
found in the mind of his successor, but combined with moral purity; while through it all Elagabalus seeks and takes only that which may excite his passions.

For his absurd extravagances and his infamous debauchery we may turn to the pages of Lampridius. History notes these turpitudes or these follies; it does not delay over them. We need only say that, after the example of Asiatic monarchs, who seek their ministers

¹ Bust of *paronazetto*: Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 58.

in the lowest ranks, when he did not sell the great offices of state, he assigned them to dancers and barbers; that he treated the Senate as a troop of slaves in togas, — which unfortunately they were; that his palace was sanded with gold dust, and that his silken garments, covered with jewels, were never worn twice; that he filled his fish-ponds with rose-water,¹ and that he had naval engagements represented on lakes of wine;² that he finally dressed as a woman, painted his face, wrought at work in wool, and had himself styled *domina* or *imperatrix*, the Emperor then being represented by the son of a cook or some young athlete. In less than four years he espoused four or five wives, whom he repudiated and took back again. The first of these, Julia Cornelia Paula, of eminent family, retained only for one year her title and honors; he carried off the second, Julia Aquilia Severa, from the altar of Vesta, — an act of sacrilege which made even the Romans of that time tremble; the third, Annia Faustina, was descended from Marcus Aurelius: the memory of the great Emperor protected her but for a few weeks against the caprices of the imperial profligate.

Meanwhile, Maesa saw how such a manner of reigning must end. By adroit flattery she induced Elagabalus to give the title of Caesar to his cousin Alexander, and to adopt the latter as his

JULIA MAESA.³

¹ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 19. During the banquets, the ceiling opened, to let fall upon the guests such a quantity of flowers that many were smothered by them.

² *Ibid.*, 16, 22.

³ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 59.

son. He ought to devote himself, she told him, to the enjoyment of his feasts, to his sacred orgies, and to his divine duties, while another had the care of public affairs. This other was



ELAGABALUS.¹

a boy twelve years old, and the adoptive father was but sixteen; the new Caesar had however already manifested his gentle and admirable character, so that his grandmother and his mother centred in him the hope of their house. His gracefulness, his discretion, the strict masters whom he had about him, the perils which it was known that he incurred, and the secret largesses of Mamaea to the praetorians, obtained for him a popularity at which Elagabalus became incensed. The Emperor sought various means to put his rival out of the way quietly. But Mamaea allowed her son to taste no beverage or dish sent by the Emperor; she surrounded him with trusty servants; and the levity of Elagabalus, which permitted his designs to be easily perceived, made it possible also to prevent the execution of them. He at last deter-

mined on an overt attack. He sent an order to the senators and to the soldiers to take from his cousin the title of Caesar, while at the same time murderers sought the boy in order to kill him. But the order caused a tumult, in which the Emperor narrowly escaped death. He was obliged to go with Alexander to the camp of the praetorians. who required of him the death or dismissal of his unworthy favorites, commanded the Emperor to change his mode of life, and ordered their prefects to see to this, and especially to prevent Alexander from imitating his cousin. They were like the French Cabochiens of 1413, enjoining morality upon the

¹ Statue, heroic size; Collection Mattei; *Clarae, Musée*, etc. pl. 768, No. 2,487 A.

Dauphin, driving from the Hôtel Saint-Pol the musicians and dancers when they lingered too late into the night, and even the councillors who displeased them, conducting the latter to Parliament to be judged, or murdering them on the way thither. There is, however, this difference,—in 1413 Paris was in a state of revolution; while at Rome, in 221, that the soldiery should give orders to the Emperor had become an habitual thing.

On the first of January, 222, the two lads were to go before the Senate to assume the consular dignities. It required all the urging of Maesa and the threat of a new outbreak of the praetorians to induce Elagabalus to allow himself to be accompanied by his adopted son. But he absolutely refused to perform with him at the Capitol the customary ceremonies. At another time he caused a report of the death of Alexander to be put in circulation, in order to judge, from the conduct of the soldiers, whether he might assassinate his young cousin without incurring too great risk. But the soldiery, being secretly informed that the young prince was alive, demanded his presence among them with loud shouts, recalled the guard which they sent each morning to the palace, and shut themselves up in their camp. At this result of his experiment, Elagabalus hastened to appease them by showing to them the Caesar. His mother and Mamaea followed him, each exciting the praetorians against the other. Mamaea at last carried the day. A tumult broke out, blows were interchanged, the friends and ministers of Elagabalus, and Soaemias herself, were slaughtered. That effeminate voluptuary, whom a crumpled rose-leaf disturbed, hid himself in the sinks of the camp. There he was slain; and his corpse, dragged through the streets, was flung into the Tiber, and the god of Emesa narrowly escaped sharing the fate of his pontiff. The Senate consigned to infamy the memory of Elagabalus, and history does the same (March 11, 222).

His cousin, now thirteen years of age,¹ was proclaimed Augustus, and took the name of Marcus Aurelius Alexander, to which the soldiers added—in memory of him who was believed by some to be the new Emperor's grandfather—that of Severus.²

¹ Herodian (v. 7) says that he was entering on his twelfth year when Elagabalus adopted him; he is generally assigned three years more.

² Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander (Eckhel, vii. 281). I have already described

To mark distinctly that the Oriental orgy was ended, and that the ancient deities dispossessed by the Syrian idol had resumed their sway, Alexander engraved on his coins the title of priest of Rome (*sacerdos Urbis*).¹

(Vol. VI. p. 201) that session of the Senate at which Alexander declined the other names which the Conscript Fathers desired to confer upon him.

¹ Eckhel, vii. 270.



IVLIA SOAEMIAS AVGVSTA.

CHAPTER XCIII.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS (MARCH 11, 222—MARCH 19, 235 A.D.).

I. — REACTION AGAINST THE PRECEDING REIGN; MAMAEA AND ULPIAN; THE COUNCIL OF THE EMPEROR.

WE now see the heritage of Augustus, by the grace of the soldiers, in the hands of two women and a child! What vitality in this Empire, which, though under female sway, yet remained erect and imposing!

But these two women were of distinguished ability. We have already remarked the skilful prudence of Maesa and the lofty character of Alexander's mother. The latter by a well-ordered education developed the favorable tendencies of this gentle and virtuous youth. She placed about her son the ablest masters, taking care that they should also be men of the greatest integrity, and she caused him to be taught enough of literature and art to have a taste and respect for them, but not enough to be tempted to bestow upon them the time demanded by public business. It is noteworthy that Alexander expressed himself more easily in Greek than in Latin. This invasion of Greek into the higher Roman society is a sign of the progress accomplished by another invasion,—that of Oriental hellenism and Alexandrian syncretism, of which this Emperor was also a representative.



GOLD COIN.¹

“From the day of his accession,” says Herodian,² “he was surrounded with all the pomp of sovereign power; but the care of the Empire was left to the two princesses, who made an effort to bring back good morals and the ancient dignified demeanor. They chose sixteen senators, the most eminent for experience and

¹ IVLIA MAMAEA AVG[usta], mother of Alexander Severus.

² vi. i. ‘A coin of 222 bears the words, *Liberalitas Aug.* This was the resuming of the *congiarium* granted *ut moris erat, suscepto imperio*, says Eckhel.

integrity of life, to form the imperial council.¹ Without their approval no measures were carried into execution. The people, the army, the Senate, were delighted with this new form of government, which replaced the most insolent of tyrannies by a sort of aristocracy."

It may be doubted whether the Senate was as satisfied as Herodian says with the new importance given to the *consilium principis*. We shall refer elsewhere to this institution, which took from the ancient masters of Rome their last prerogatives.

The Conscript Fathers gave themselves at least the pleasure of devoting to the infernal gods the Emperor or the consul who, in future, should give a woman a seat in their august assembly. Doubtless this decree of the Senate appeared to them as memorable as the one ordering the victorious Pyrrhus to depart from Italy.²

"The statues of the gods which Elagabalus had taken away," continues the historian, "were at once restored to their places. Those functionaries who had unworthily obtained office were dismissed, and their places filled by the most capable citizens. . . . In order to preserve the Emperor from the mistakes which might be caused by absolute authority, the ardor of youth, or by some of the vices natural to his family, Mamaea strictly guarded the entrance to the palace, and allowed no man to gain admission whose morals were of bad repute."

This reaction against the last reign, these precautions to save the new from the same excesses, were legitimate; and since it had been deemed expedient to make a boy an Emperor, it was fitting to guide him gently from his childish sports to the management of the Empire. This could not better be done than by means of the government of aged men and women, by this paternal and gentle authority, the calm and somnolence of which were calculated to protect Alexander's minority, and to enable him to reach full age, if the soldiers consented to grant him time to do so.

¹ Lampridius (*Alex.* 15) makes the number twenty. The council was complemented, in certain circumstances, by adding other senators, so that the number of fifty Conscript Fathers, required for the validity of a decree, might be attained. This council also made appointments to the Senate (*Ibid.* 18). The last great juriseconsults of Rome, Florentinus Marcius, Hermogenes, Saturninus, and Modestinus, numerous fragments of whose writings the *Pandects* have preserved to us, were members of this council, together with Paulus and Ulpian.

² Lamprid., *Heliog.* 18. Dating from the time of Alexander Severus, we find no more *senatus-consulta*.

Into the imperial council Mamaea had called her compatriot, Ulpian, whom she appointed praetorian prefect,¹ thus making him the second personage in the state. In reality, considering the age of the Emperor, Ulpian was the first;² for he was present at all the imperial audiences, reported matters to Alexander, with the decisions to be given, and had the conduct of the whole government. Under this great juriscounsel,³ justice was impartial and the police service vigilant. Those who speculated on the destitution of the people, the venality of a judge, or the compliance of a functionary, had to render strict account; but no one lost his life or property without a judgment given after arguments on both sides.⁵ Many honorable rescripts were promulgated. They did not introduce any modifications into the law, but we see in them the provident kindness

JULIA MAMAEA, MOTHER OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.⁴

¹ He appears to have held this position under Elagabalus (Lamprid., *Alex.* 26, and Aur. Victor, *De Cæs.* 26).

² See, in respect to this officer's duties, Vol. VI. p. 533.

³ Of the numerous works of Ulpian, the most important were eighty-three books *Ad Edictum*, and fifty-one *Ad Sabinum*. Numerous fragments remain to us of his *Liber regularum, singularis*. The extracts from these various treatises form a third of the *Digest*.

⁴ Bust of Pentelican marble, Museum of the Louvre.

⁵ This is the assertion of Lampridius; yet the death of the father-in-law of Alexander, and of Turinus, whom the Emperor caused to be suffocated (Vol. VI. p. 228), the murder of several of his councillors (Lamprid., *Alex.* 67), and some others, were not the result of judicial orders.

which marks this reign,¹—a characteristic also of the legislation of the Antonines and of Severus. Mention is even made in them of the liberty of the subjects,—conditioned, it is true, upon their good will and obedience.²

The ability of these wise councillors is further marked by administrative details, some of which were of real importance. The praetorian prefecture gave senatorial rank,—the extension of the judicial cognizance of the prefect, who sometimes had to sit in judgment on senators, rendering this change necessary; and his decisions had the force of law when they were not contrary to ordinances already existing.³ With Ulpian this office attained the zenith of its power.

Fourteen curators, all of consular rank, were intrusted with the duty of deciding, together with the urban prefect, upon all affairs concerning the fourteen districts of the city.⁴ This edict furnished a municipal council to the capital of the Empire, which, in respect to the maintenance of public order, had hitherto been subject to the sole authority of the prefect; it prescribed, moreover, that resolutions, in order to be valid, should be adopted in presence of all the members, or at least of a majority of them. This council, appointed, not elected, was none the less for Rome a guarantee of better administration.

The *assessores* of the presidents were entitled to salaries, which gave them the character of public functionaries, but increased the expenditures of the treasury;⁵ and it was forbidden to the provincial governors, as well as to the persons employed about them, to engage in business or money-lending in the countries under their rule. We have seen⁶ what wise recommendations Ulpian made to them for the protection of the common people.

It had long been the custom to make grants of lands to the veterans. The rule was now established that officers and soldiers put in possession of domains on the frontiers might transmit

¹ For instance: . . . *Cavetur ut si patronus libertum suum non aluerit, jus patroni perdat* (*Digest*, xxxvii. 14, 5, sec. 1).

² *Digest*, xlix. 1, 25: . . . *Tantum mihi curae est eorum, qui reguntur, libertatis, quantum et bonae voluntatis eorum et obedientiae.*

³ *Code*, i. 26, 2, ann. 235.

⁴ *Lamprid.*, *Alex.* 32.

⁵ *Ibid.* 45. Pescennius Niger had already attempted to introduce this reform, *ne consiliarii eos gravarent quibus assidebant* (*Spart.*, *Nig.* 7).

⁶ Vol. VI. p. 166.

them to their children when the latter followed the profession of arms; otherwise the land reverted to the imperial treasury.¹ These were military benefices, and the beginning of a new order of property.

The post of *dux*,—that is, of chief of the army, without territorial command,—which we have seen originating under Severus, appears now to have become a regular office.²

Finally, the government constituted what may be called “banks of deposit,”³ and organized into corporations the trades which had not as yet taken that form; assigning to each one a *defensor*, as will later be given to the cities,⁵ and establishing for them a special jurisdiction. Some were very rich,—the corporation of the money-changers, for example, who erected an arch to Septimius Severus. It was a new kind of industry, beginning or becoming developed.



II. — THE GENTLENESS, PIETY, AND WEAKNESS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

WHAT part had Alexander himself in these measures? With an Emperor of thirteen, the councillors must have retained power for a long period. But it may be said that all which they did in the interests of the subjects corresponded, if not with the ideas, at least with the feelings of the young ruler.

Alexander's biographer has sought to make of this reign what Xenophon makes of the reign of Cyrus,—a beautiful “morality;” and although this scribe of Constantine had not yet embraced his master's religion, to flatter Constantine he has represented the

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 57.

² Lamprid., *ibid.* 51. Capitolinus, in the life of Gordian III., also speaks of *duces honorati*, that is, honorary dukes.

³ Lamprid., *ibid.* 38. Medals, *Moneta restituta*, etc., attest also a monetary reform (Eckhel, vii. 279); but the explanations of Lampridius on this subject (39) throw no light on the question.

⁴ MON. RESTITVTA. Moneta standing, holding a balance and a horn of plenty (Medium bronze of Alexander Severus).

⁵ Lamprid., *ibid.* 22 and 33. This *defensor* was no doubt a different person from the *patronus*.

pagan Emperor who was least pagan, as already half-Christian. From this it has resulted that Alexander has been the favorite of history; as if, on emerging from the corrupt atmosphere of the preceding period, and before entering the sanguinary gloom of the following age, historians had taken pleasure in the description of this graceful lad, whom youth, virtue, and misfortune have consecrated. In certain respects this good fame of Alexander is legitimate. After the saturnalia of the late reign we have an Emperor pure in morals, simple in tastes, and making his life a public example more efficacious than all legal enactments. We feel an affection for this amiable youth who would have the public crier proclaim, while criminals were being chastised, these words, which were also graven on the front of his palace: "Do not to another what you would not have done to yourself;" who wrote in verse the lives of the good Emperors,¹ and each day in his *lararium* spent a little time silent before the images of those whom he called the benefactors of humanity,—monarchs or philosophers, founders of empires or religions;² who, finally, constantly read the *Republic* of Plato, Cicero's treatise *De Officiis*, and the *Epistles* of Horace, to draw from these noble books his rules of conduct. Every seventh day he went up to the Capitol and visited the temples of the city,—without, however, always making rich offerings in them, thinking, with Persius, that the worship loved by the gods is the practice of virtue, and that they have no need of gold,—

. . . In sanctis quid facit aurum?

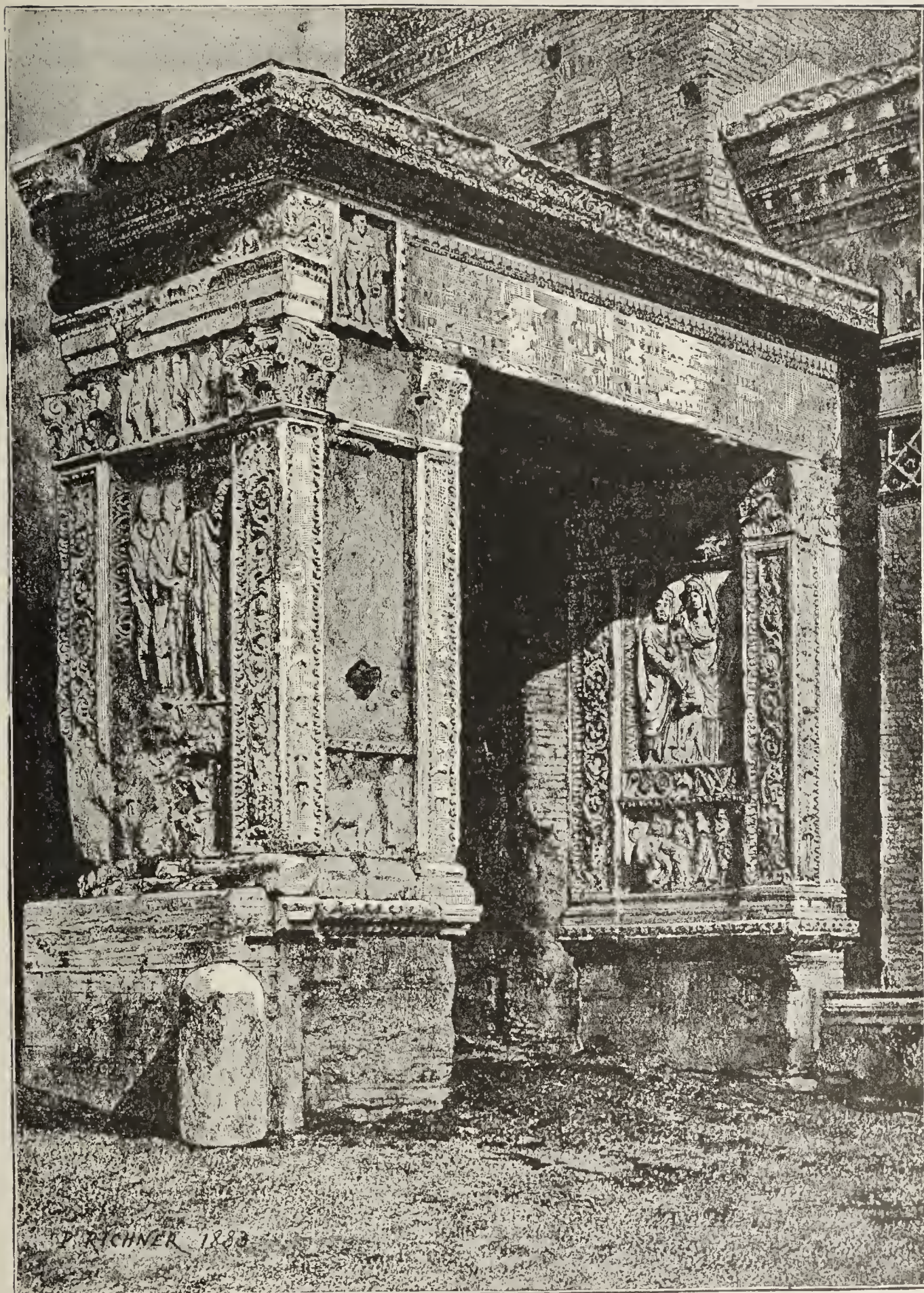
But he was liberal to the poor, to his friends, and to those of his officers who had well fulfilled their duties.

The great alimentary institution of Trajan will be remembered; this Alexander continued and extended,³ and founded another; he

¹ . . . *Vitas principum bonorum versibus scripsit* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 27).

² Lampridius, who supplies this information (*Alex.* 28), adds this detail: "He never entered into his oratory unless *si facultas esset, id est, si non cum uore cubuisset.*" This was a general rule, of which Ovid had already spoken (*Fasti*, ii. 329, and iv. 657). The Church inherited this custom. "This kind of abstinence," says Abbé Greppo, "was practised in the primitive Church prior to participation in the holy mysteries, as is still the case in the churches of the East, whose ministers are not constrained to celibacy" (*Trois mém. d'hist. ecclési.* p. 180). The Russian peasant observes the same rule the day preceding the Sabbath.

³ *Puellas et pueros Mammaeas et Mammaeanos instituit* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 56). A coin of Plautilla, which represents a woman carrying a child, shows that Severus also took care of this institution (Eckhel, vii. 226).



THE ARCH OF THE MONEY-CHANGERS AT ROME.

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lent money to poor families that they might buy land, and required of them only an interest of three per cent, payable from the product of the property.¹ Frequently he even made a gift of land, slaves, cattle, and implements of agriculture. While he augmented the tax on the trades supplying articles of luxury, on the goldsmiths, gilders, furriers, etc., he diminished the other imposts, and lamented that fiscal agents were a necessary evil. He granted remissions to a number of cities, on condition that the money which he thus left to them should be employed in rebuilding their dilapidated edifices; he restored at his own expense many old bridges and constructed new ones. And

finally, he founded schools, paid professors, pensioned pupils, and recompensed advocates who took nothing from their clients:²

these are our scholarships and our

judiciary aid. For himself, great frugality and much economy, to the extent of being obliged to borrow silver ware and slaves when he gave a state banquet; towards all, plebeians or senators, even towards his own domestics, an affability which, in the Emperor, did not allow the master to be seen. At twenty he was a sage.

This wisdom, — which was not the fruit of experience, but a gift of nature, — this kindness, which showed itself in everything, does honor to the man; of the ruler other things are demanded. His filial tenderness was weakness when he dared not resist his mother, who, alarmed by the many catastrophes she had witnessed,



SALLUSTIA ORBIANA.³

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 21. As to imposts, it is impossible to admit, with Lampridius, that he reduced them to the twentieth of what Elagabalus exacted. On the payment of the tax in gold, see above, p. 81, note 3.

² *Rhetoribus, grammaticis, medicis, aruspibus, mathematicis, mechanicis, architectis salaria instituit, et auditoria decrevit, et discipulos cum annonis pauperum filios modo ingenuos dari jussit. Etiam in provinciis oratoribus forensibus multum detulit, plerisque etiam annonas dedit, quos constitisset gratis agere* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 44).

³ The Empress Sallustia Orbia, second wife of Alexander Severus, wearing a diadem; on the reverse, FECVNDITAS TEMPORVM. Orbia seated; before her, Fecundity kneeling, holding a horn of plenty and carrying two children. (Bronze medallion.)

sought in heaping up treasure¹ a safeguard against evil days, — as if, for her and for her son, in case of defeat, there could be any other refuge than death. This weakness even becomes odious if it be true, as Herodian relates, that he allowed Mamaea to drive from the palace his young wife, who claimed the honors of an *augusta*, and who deserved them;² if he suffered his father-in-law to be put to death for having complained to the authorities of the time — the soldiers of the praetorium — of insults which he had received from the Empress.³

Alexander's regret that he could not abolish all taxes is the language of a woman or of a courtier of the rabble, and his love for Plato's *Republic* betrays a mind which the good sense of Horace, his other favorite, did not suffice to preserve from fair illusions. His prohibition to senators of making investments, to capitalists of lending at more than three per cent, to those whose consciences were disquieted, of presenting themselves at the imperial receptions, — these moral orders, proclaimed by the herald or affixed to edicts, show a good disposition; but how was it possible to secure their execution? The regulations about costumes for the purpose of distinguishing the different orders of citizens, about garments for summer and winter, for fair weather and rain, were other puerilities, of which Ulpian and Paulus surely prescribed very little. Before appointing a functionary, the Emperor published the candidate's name, and invited the citizens, in case the person had committed any crime, to denounce him; adding, however, that the informer would be punished with death if he did not furnish proof of his accusation. This is a twofold absurdity: a wise government is bound to make its own investigations; and no one was tempted to respond to an appeal when so terrible a penalty might be incurred. But Alexander Severus seems to have sought to transform the Empire into an ideal republic.

¹ See on this subject the sarcasms of Julian in the *Caesars*.

² The name of this young woman is not known; but after having repudiated her, Alexander re-married, and though no author has spoken of his second wife, we have coins of hers and an inscription in which she is named with the title of *augusta*: Gnaca Scia Herennia Sallustia Barbia Orbiana Augusta. See Eekhel, vii. 284, and *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* ii. 3,734.

³ Others accuse the father-in-law of a conspiracy against his son-in-law, — which is hardly probable. The catastrophe was doubtless brought about by a women's quarrel. The young Empress is believed to have had the fate of Plautilla, but without deserving it, for she loved her husband tenderly (Herod., vi. 5; Lamprid., *Alex.* 49).

Still further it is usual to praise the pious thought which led him to place, in his *lararium*, Apollonius of Tyana by the side of Jesus, Orpheus beside Abraham,—a vague religion of humanity, whose confused aspirations are, however, sufficient for some choicer souls. Saint Augustine tells us of a matron who had constructed a miniature chapel, in which she burned incense before the images of Jesus and Paul, of Homer and Pythagoras.¹ These acts of homage to sanctity and genius honor the individual; but it was not by means of so simple a form of faith that populations eager for the marvellous could be controlled.

Like him whose name and virtues the young Emperor possessed, Alexander would have been in private life the noblest of men; in a position of sovereign power he was, far more than Marcus Aurelius, inadequate. The government of human affairs is truly a masculine task. Those who succeed in it are the men by nature fitted to rule, men of vigorous mind and of strong will. These qualities were especially necessary in a state like the Roman Empire; and—it must be acknowledged—Alexander Severus did not possess them. His bust in the Louvre, with its weak and undecided features, suggests a mild-mannered person, incapable of acting, with eyes that look but do not see. Julian, in the *Caesars*, represents him sitting sadly on the steps leading to the hall where the Emperors and gods are going to banquet; Silenus mocks at him and at his mother, the hoarder of treasure; Justice does indeed consent to chastise his murderers, but she turns away “from the poor fool, the great simpleton, who in a corner bewails his misfortune!”

For several years the soldiery, satiated, had left the Empire at peace. But to preserve discipline among these coarse, greedy, and violent men, who knew their own strength and knew nothing else,—neither the Empire, nor magistrates, nor the law,—there was needed a ruler who would impose upon them a respectful fear as well as obedience, who would keep them in harness, glut them with booty and with glory, and make them proud of being soldiers. With its mighty army of mercenaries, the Empire was condemned to have for successful rulers none but great generals. Severus had been such; Alexander was not. Accordingly, civil

¹ *Liber de Haeresibus*, iii. 7.

order, which had been protected by the former against his soldiers, could not be protected by the latter.

It is said that, before renouncing philosophy and the arts, he had consulted the *Sortes Vergilianae*, and that the poet-prophet had responded by the famous lines:—

Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera.

.

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane memento.

Lampridius ascribes to his hero the virtues which these verses demand in him who is to wield the sovereign power, representing Alexander as a stern defender of the ancient discipline. “The soldiers,” he says, “called him Severus on account of his excessive severity;”¹ and as a proof he shows the populations flocking together on the passage of the army, and “taking the soldiers for senators,”² such was the gravity of their mien and the propriety of their conduct, and elsewhere he quotes certain classic reminiscences which the Emperor turned to present use. A senator known for his peculations comes and salutes him at the curia; Alexander repeats against him Cicero’s apostrophe to Catiline: *O tempora, O mores! vivit; immo in senatum venit!* A legion mutinies; he reproves it in the words of Caesar: “Retire, Quirites.” Some of the officers who had not been able to control their men were, it is true, put to death; but at the end of a month the mutinous legion was reinstated. Mention is also made of cohorts decimated.

Facts like the following do not, however, permit us to give to this reign such a character for strict discipline. A quarrel arose in Rome between the civilians and the praetorians. Both sides were much in earnest;³ but before the populace would have dared to affront the troops, they must have been driven to extremities by many deeds of insolence, of which we know that the soldiers were not sparing. There was fighting for three days, with much bloodshed. At last the praetorians, driven from the streets, set fire to the houses; and not until the conflagration

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 25.

² . . . *Ut non milites sed senatores transire diceres* (*ibid.* 49).

³ See what is said of the Roman *plebs* in the appendix to book lxxix. of Dion by the anonymous author who wrote this passage.

threatened to involve the whole city, did the two parties consent to desist. We do not know what part the government took in this affair; but we are justified in saying that such disorders occur only under a feeble authority, and we may ask ourselves what the



ALEXANDER SEVERUS.¹

legionaries in the provinces did, if the praetorians, so devoted to the young Emperor, conducted themselves thus in his very presence.

Mamaea had at first placed at the head of the praetorians two experienced generals, Flavianus and Chrestus; later, she also

¹ Bust of the Vatican.

gave them Ulpian for a colleague. These men of war did not relish finding civilians in the praetorium, who, bringing thither the regular habits of magistrates, saw to it that ordinances were executed. The new prefect was displeasing to the cohorts and to their chiefs, who formed a scheme for getting rid of him.¹ Ulpian anticipated them by having the two prefects and their accomplices put to death. This tragedy provoked another. The whole corps took up the cause of the victims, and Ulpian's life was several times in danger. In a final and formidable riot he took refuge in the palace; the soldiers forced the gates and slew him at the feet of Alexander, who vainly threw over him the imperial purple.² This was in 228. We seem to be on the shores of the Bosphorus, hearing janissaries demand the head of a vizier.

A certain Epagathus, formerly a confidential agent of Caracalla and Macrinus, had played a part in this catastrophe by inciting the soldiers against Ulpian. He was only a freedman; but the government did not dare to punish him, for fear of exciting a new revolt. He was sent on a mission into Egypt, then recalled, under a pretext, into Crete, where the executioner awaited him.³ This seraglio-justice would of itself prove the incurable weakness of the government.

The following account of Dion is another indication to the same effect. Our historian was not "a thunderbolt of war," and in the army it does not seem probable that he ever took any very decided measures. Yet when he returned from his government of Pannonia the praetorians were of opinion that he had shown himself too severe in discipline. "They demanded my punishment," he says, "fearing lest they should be submitted to a similar rule. Instead of paying attention to their complaints, the Emperor gave me the consulship. But the displeasure of the praetorians made him fear that, when they saw me with the insignia of this dignity, they might kill me, and he ordered me to spend the remainder of my term of office at some place in Italy, outside Rome."⁴ The prudent consul did better; finding that public life was becoming too difficult, he abandoned Rome, Italy, even his

¹ Zosimus, i. 11.

² . . . *Quem saepe a militum ira objectu purpuræ suae defendit (Alexander)*. (Lamprid., *Alex.* 51.)

³ Dion, lxxx. 2, 4.

⁴ *Id.*, lxxx. 4 and 5.

great book of history, which he closed with this last narrative, and Homer's lines : —

“But Jove, beyond the encountering arms, the dust,
The carnage, and the bloodshed and the din,
Bore Hector.”¹

Dion had nothing in common with Hector; but it was from a bloody fray that he likewise retired.

We here take leave of a feeble writer, — a man, however, who, having studied the Republic in its grandeur and its decadence, the Empire under Augustus and Nerò, Hadrian and Commodus, was able to follow the logical connection of this history developing through the centuries under the double action of political wisdom and of necessities produced by circumstances. If we inquire what were his sentiments in the matter of government,² we shall see that, notwithstanding the acts of cruelty which he relates, notwithstanding those of which he himself had been the witness and wellnigh the victim, Dion was a strong partisan of the imperial monarchy. When the Emperor was a bad one, men longed for a change of ruler, but without desiring a change in the form of government. No one at that time imagined any other, and, it must also be admitted, no other was possible. Dion only asks of the Emperor that he should be on good terms with the Senate, his council. This was the wish of Tacitus, and it had been the practice of the Antonines. Unfortunately, since Caracalla, and now more and more every day, the Emperors and the consuls, the praetorian prefects and the senators, were all of them at the mercy of the soldiery; and the characteristic of such rule is frequency of riotous disturbances.

Revolts, indeed, broke out everywhere, — some, says a contemporary, very formidable;³ and it was necessary to disband entire legions.⁴ Those of Mesopotamia killed their chief, Flavius Heracleo, and made an emperor, who, to escape from them, threw himself into the Euphrates and was drowned. Another assumed the purple in Osrhoene. A third attempted to assume it at Rome even.

¹ *Iliad*, xi. 163 [Bryant's trans.].

² Dion, lii. 13 *et seq.*

³ *Id.*, lxxx. 3. Cf. Zosimus, i. 12.

⁴ Cf. Lamprid., *Alex.* 53, 54, 59; Herod., vi. 4, 7; Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* xxiv. 3; Dion, lxxx. 4.

In the case of this last person, the Emperor, informed of the design, invites him to the palace, takes him to the Senate, to the army, overwhelms him with matters of business, and breaks him down with fatigue. After a few days, the would-be emperor asks leave to return to his house and his obscurity.

These seditions and attempts miscarry; but the Empire is shaken by them, and they afford encouragement to the enemy. In Mauretania Tingitana, on the Illyrian and the Armenian frontiers, there are invaders to be repelled; the Germans ravage a part of Gaul, and the Persians reclaim the ancient territory of Cyrus, — that is to say, Asia as far as the Cyclades.

III. — THE SASSANIDAE.

SINCE the day when Arsaces the Brave had revolted against the Seleucidae, four hundred and seventy years¹ had elapsed, — a very long duration for an Oriental dynasty. The Parthian monarchy had extended itself from the Euphrates to the Indus; but the Arsacidae — men of shrewdness or violence, according to the occasion — had nothing of the organizing genius of Rome. They neither established a permanent — and therefore a well-organized — army, nor an administration binding together the different elements of the state so as to form a homogeneous whole. They suffered to exist about them a mighty feudalism,² the cause of constant disturbances, and in their provinces populations which, having in common with the rest of the Empire nothing except the tribute paid to the Great King, retained their customs, their national memories and chiefs, — that is to say, the hope and the means of some day regaining their independence. The indignities which Trajan, Avidius Cassius, and Septimius Severus, and even Caracalla, had inflicted upon the Parthian monarchy, had destroyed its prestige, which the treaty with Macrinus did not restore.

¹ Or 476 according to other reckonings. Cf. De Sainte-Croix, *Mém. sur le gouvernement des Parthes*, p. 30.

² Dion, xli. 15; Tac., *Ann.* xi. 10; and Herod., vi. 12.

In the mountains of Persis lived a man of royal blood, Ardishir, or Artaxerxes, regarded as a descendant of Darius, and said to be son or grandson of Sassan, whence the name of his race, the Sassanidae.¹ Admitted into the household of the governor of Persis, he attracted notice by his courage and address, gained the favor of the people as well as of his master, and, the latter having been displaced, he slew the succeeding king, raised a revolt among the Persians, as Cyrus had formerly done, drew in the neighboring nations, with whom he had long before established a good understanding, and vanquished the Parthians in three battles. In the last, Artabanus was killed, and Ardishir assumed the tiara (226–227). On the cliff of Nakschi-Roustan, in the environs of Persepolis, may be seen two warriors engaged in single combat. It is Ardishir wresting the diadem from his rival. By placing this memorial of his victory near the ancient capital of the Achaemenidae, he sought to testify to all eyes that his victory was the restoration of the empire of Cyrus.

ARTAXERXES I.²

Oriental monarchies are established with the same rapidity that characterizes their decline. In a few years the mountaineers of Persis had come back into the capitals of the first Achaemenidae, “and all the kings had put on the sash of submission, suspended from their ears the ring of servitude, and taken upon their shoulders the harness of obedience.”³ In the place of an old and enfeebled state, Rome now beheld, along her eastern frontier, an empire abounding in warlike zeal, as is always the case with new powers.

The revolution just accomplished was religious as well as polit-

¹ According to Sainte-Croix (*ibid.* p. 22) the Persians had retained their national chiefs; and Ardishir, at the time of the revolt, was in authority over the country.

² Artaxerxes wears the round tiara, adorned with the symbol, in the form of a caduceus, called *mahrou*. The Pehlvi legend gives the name of the prince. (Cornelian, cut in cabochon, 35 millim. by 25. Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,339.)

³ Mirkhond, *Hist. des Sassanides*, tr. Sylvestre de Sacy, p. 278.

ical. The Arsacidae, feeling the influence of the civilization which Alexander had carried into Eastern Asia, had become Hellenized. They delighted in Greek customs, spoke the language of Greece, adored some of its gods, were accustomed to have the dramas of the great Athenian poets represented at their court, and in the legends on their coins, which were in Greek, they adopted, among other titles, that of Philhellenes.¹

This mental culture disposed them to tolerance, and Christianity had profited by it to make an entrance into their provinces. But the tributary nations had preserved the old Persian worship, Mazdaeism;

ORMUZD.³SILVER COIN OF ARTAXERXES.²

the consecrated fire was always burning on their sacred pyres, and the magi were numerous. They served the cause of him who was announced as the avenger of Ormuzd and the restorer of the laws of Zoroaster. This monotheistic religion — one of those which do most honor to humanity — placed below the infinite being, Aboura-Mazda, *izeds*, or good genii, celestial spirits and ministers of the will of the Most High. Hence it did not require much flattery to induce the magi to transform a powerful and religious king into a visible *ized*; and Sapor could say, without giving offence: “Do you not know that I am of the race of the gods?”⁴

In return for the assistance which these priests gave him, Ardishir accorded them great influence. “He restored,” says a

¹ De Saey, *Mém. sur diverses antiquités de la Perse*, p. 44.

² Coin of Artaxerxes, bearing on the reverse a lighted pyre. At the right, the head of Artaxerxes, with the tiara bearing the star, symbol of the sun, and the legend: “The Adorer of Ormuzd. . . .” On the reverse, a pyre, from which dart flames. Legend: “The Divine Artaxerxes.” Silver coin.

³ The bust of Ormuzd, surrounded by flames and placed on a pyre. Pehlvi inscription; annulary seal. (Intaglio on veined agate, 36 millim. diameter; *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,336.)

⁴ De Saey, *Mémoire*, etc., pp. 36–41. On the monotheistic character of Mazdaeism, see the articles of M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, *Journal des Savants*, June and July, 1878.

Greek historian, "the magi to honor."¹ This body of clergy, again restored to power, will make intolerance the political law of the Sassanidae and will let persecution loose against the Christians; the religious and national zeal of these monarchs was able, however, to give to the new dynasty a vitality and renown which the preceding had not known.² The danger to the Roman Empire thus increasing in this quarter, Rome was presently compelled to withdraw her forces from the line of the Rhine and the Danube in order to fortify that of the Euphrates and the Tigris; and that she might watch this new enemy from a nearer point, she ended by displacing the centre of her power, and removing her capital from the West to the East.

The war of four centuries which is about to begin between the two empires is therefore one of those many wars which religious zeal has kindled. It is characterized at first, in the case of both nations, by revived recollections of the expedition of Alexander, — characterized on one side by admiration and reverence, on the other by the bitterest hatred. We have seen Caracalla honoring the memory of the Macedonian hero, the second Severus taking his name, and the legions organizing in phalanx. Men felt the shade of the Greek conqueror would march before the Roman army as its guide on the road to Ctesiphon. On the other side of the Tigris, this Alexander, whose generous soul we are wont to extol, had become to the magi, in their patriotic and religious lament, "the accursed one" who slaughtered the nobles and priests, who "burned the books of revelation," and who "is burning, in his turn, in eternal flames." Even to this day the Parsees never speak of "Iskender Roumi" except as an accursed tyrant. "After him," said they, "religion was brought low, and the faithful into oppression, until King Ardishir re-established the true faith."³ These conflicting sentiments announce the importance of the struggle.

¹ Ἐξ οὗ καὶ πρὸς Πέρσαις οἱ Μάγοι ἐπίδοξοι (Niceph., *Hist. eccl.* i. 55, ed. of 1630); Agathias (vol. ii. pp. 64, 65) thinks the same. M. de Harlez (*Avesta*, p. xxxv) says that Ardishir was of the race of the magi, and himself a magus.

² On their coins the Sassanidae assume the title of "servant of Ormuzd," and on the reverse they have placed "the altar of fire," — a representation and title which are found on the medals of the Arsacidæ. See De Sacy, *Mém. sur diverses antiq. de la Perse*, pp. 171 *et seq.*

³ See the article of M. James Darmesteter, *La Légende d'Alexandre chez les Perses*, in vol. xxxv. of the *Bibliothèque des Hautes-Études*.

IV. — EXPEDITIONS AGAINST THE PERSIANS AND THE GERMANS ; DEATH OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS

BEFORE engaging in close contest with the great Empire of the West, the son of Sassan turned his weapons against the neighboring populations of Roman Mesopotamia. He attacked the city of Atra, the stronghold of the Scenite Arabs, but with no better fortune than Trajan and Severus had had in similar attempts; and he endeavored to overthrow the Arsacidæ of Armenia, who from their hill-tops and inaccessible fortresses defied invasion. These expeditions doubtless had for him but a secondary interest; at least these reverses do not appear to have lessened his hopes, and in 231 he invaded the Roman province.

At this news Alexander and his pacific councillors wrote to the Persian a beautiful letter, full of the most edifying advice. The ravages continued; Nisibis was besieged, and the enemy's scouts penetrated as far as Cappadocia. "All these lands belong to me," said Ardishir; and it seemed as if he were going to take them. There was no alternative at Rome but to be resigned to war; great preparations were made, and from each province, from each army, went forth detachments on their way towards Syria. Alexander quitted his capital in tears, but firmly resolved to do his duty, if not as a soldier, at least as an Emperor.¹ He took the road through Illyria and Thrace, collecting soldiers on his march, and entered Syria with a large army. He there found the troops given up to disorder and mutiny; perhaps there had even been a revolt, if the proclamation of an emperor by the army of Mesopotamia may be referred to this time. On the arrival of Alexander and reinforcements sent by the legions of Pannonia, all became quiet. A phalanx of thirty thousand men was organized, in remembrance of the phalanx of the Macedonian hero; Alexander even would have his guard armed with *argyraspides*, or shields of silver. Four hundred Persians, with splendid dress and weapons, came to summon the Emperor to evacuate Asia; he considered the demand insolent, and, refusing to recognize them as ambassadors, shut them up in Phrygia, where villages

¹ Herodian says (vii. 2) that he was accused of indolence and timidity in war.

and lands were assigned them, and then entered on the campaign in 232.

From this point accounts differ. According to a contemporary, the Emperor divided his army into three corps. The first advanced through Armenia, — a country in alliance with the Romans, — intending thence to enter the territory of the Medes; the second went, by way of the desert, towards the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates, from which point they could directly threaten Persia; the third marched through Upper Mesopotamia, but very slowly, — for which Mamaea is held responsible, who feared to expose her son. The army of the North amassed much booty, — suffering, however, considerable losses, and without obtaining any serious result, because this route could not conduct them into the heart of the new empire. The Persians opposed slight forces to this somewhat remote attack; they massed themselves against the army of the South, which they crushed, and then against that of the centre, which, composed in great part of soldiers accustomed, on the banks of the Danube and the Rhine, to cold and dampness, was prostrated by the dry and burning heat of the desert. Under this climate, which requires sobriety, “the Illyrians” drank and ate as in Germany. This error in diet was extremely fatal to them; the mortality brought on the plague, and it became necessary to fall back, after



JULIA MAMAEA AS VENUS PUDICA.¹

¹ Museum of the Louvre. Statue of Pentelican marble, formerly thought to represent Julia Soaemias. The antique head is reproduced; the attributes of Ceres have been added by a modern artist. The Empresses were often represented in the character of Venus. The statues in the “hall of the Venuses” in the Museum of Naples are portraits rather than ideal figures.

a few successes of doubtful value. Alexander himself fell ill from fatigue and anxiety. As in the time of Antony, the retreat of the army of the North across the mountains of Armenia was disastrous, and Roman corpses again strewed the roads of this country in the year 233. But the number who perished was never counted. These soldiers, recruited among the Barbarians¹ and from the dregs of the Roman populace, left behind them neither relatives nor friends to lament their death; and it was

DEAD PERSIAN WARRIOR.²

easy, by means of largesses, to persuade the survivors that the late campaign had been skilfully planned and victorious.

In truth, neither side was defeated. The Persians might congratulate themselves on a great success; but Mesopotamia, guarded by the fortresses of Severus, was not encroached upon, and not a foot of Roman territory had been conquered. Moreover, if they had exterminated one imperial army, and had stopped the advance of another, it was not without having themselves lost heavily. Accordingly, as soon as the danger of a Roman invasion had disappeared, their irregular troops dispersed, each carrying home his booty. However, the Persians had not attained their purpose, and the Romans had accomplished theirs. Far from

¹ The army which Alexander subsequently led into Gaul was composed of Barbarians: *Omnis apparatus . . . potentissimus quidem per Armenios et Osrhoënos et Parthos et omnis generis hominum* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 61). Herodian (vi. 17) adds that many Moors were also found in it.

² Marble of the Museum of Naples.

being conquered, Roman Asia had been delivered. The victory unquestionably remained with those who had obtained the result which they desired. But the two empires had come into collision once more without either of them crushing the other; and it was destined thus to continue until a new element, — the religious and aggressive fanaticism of the Arabs, — should change the conditions of the struggle.

The second account is a hymn of triumph for the Romans.

Extract from the acts of the Senate, the seventh day before the kalends of October (Sept. 25, 233); speech of the Emperor:

“Conscript Fathers, we have vanquished the Persians. A long discourse is unnecessary; it is only of importance that you should know what were their forces and their preparations. They had seven hundred elephants bearing towers filled with archers. Of these we captured three hundred; two hundred were killed on the spot; we have brought eighteen to Rome. They had a thousand chariots armed with scythes: we might have brought home two hundred of them, the horses of which have perished; but we did not think it necessary, because it would be easy to present others to you. We have defeated a hundred and twenty thousand horsemen, and killed during the war ten thousand of their cataphracti.² We have captured a great number of Persians, whom we have sold. We have reconquered all the territory which is between the two rivers; namely, Mesopotamia, which the licentious Elagabalus had allowed to be lost. We have put to rout this king Artaxerxes, whom his renown and his forces rendered so formidable; and the land of the Persians has witnessed his flight, abandoning his ensigns in the same localities where we once lost ours. This, Conscript Fathers, is what we have done. The soldiers come back rich; victory makes them forget their fatigue. It is for you now to decree thanksgivings in testimony of our gratitude to the gods.”



CONGIARIUM.¹

¹ Coin commemorative of the congiarium given by Alexander Severus. LIBERALITAS AVGVSTI V SC. Alexander seated upon a stage; behind, the praetorian prefect and a soldier; before, Liberty; at the bottom, a citizen mounting the steps. (Large bronze, Cohen, No. 288.)

² Horsemen covered with defensive armor from head to foot; see Amm. Marcellin xvi. 10.

On the morrow, in honor of this grand success, a congiarium was given to the people, and the Persian games were celebrated. The eighteen elephants which were displayed there, led men to believe in the three hundred said to have been captured.¹ There was therefore no room to doubt that Rome had now renewed the glory of Severus and Trajan.²

Certainly Rome had need that this bulletin of victory should be credited. Germany was in agitation. Seeing the dismantling of the camps which barred the road into Gaul and Illyria, the Barbarians had found the occasion propitious for renewing their predatory incursions. For a long while the frontier of the Rhine had ceased to be threatened, and in place of the eight legions which the first Emperor had kept here, there were now only four. It had therefore been easy for the Germans to pass between the remote garrisons and ravage Gaul. Hence, while waiting until the Illyrians came back from the East, it was well to have their return preceded by the report of a great victory. It was quite certain that the words pronounced in the Senate would re-echo on the banks of the Rhine.

Several months were employed in reorganizing the forces of the West, and in 234³ Alexander set out for Gaul. After reaching the environs of Mayence with his mother, he made another effort

¹ Perhaps there were none at all. Lampridius (57) speaks of a triumphal car drawn by four elephants; the medals show only a chariot and four horses (Eckhel, vii. 276). On his side, Ardashir attested his victory to his subjects by causing gold coins to be struck. The Emperors permitting neither the provinces nor the allies to utter gold coin, the aurei with the Emperor's effigy were alone in circulation; the Roman merchants could accept no others, and all trade was conducted with these coins. Procopius relates that Justinian declared war against the Arabs because they had paid the tribute in pieces of gold not bearing the imperial effigy (*De Bello Goth.* iii. 33; Zonaras, xiv. 22). In the interest of the commercial relations of their subjects, the Arsacidæ had been obliged to submit to this necessity, and had not coined gold money. The Sassanidæ coined it, but in small quantity (Mommsen, *Hist. de la monnaie romaine*, tr. Blacas, p. 16).

² An inscription recently deciphered at Kef (Sicca Veneria), in Tunis (*Bull. épigr. de la Gaule*, 1883, p. 3), mentions an offering of the *splendilissimus ordo* of the decurions, *Fortunæ Reduci Aug.*, for the triumphal return of Alexander Severus. This inscription, together with another of Pesth, leads us to think that Mamaea had accompanied her son into the East, as she followed him in the expedition against the Germans; this persistence of the "avaricious mother" in remaining always with the young Emperor was no doubt one of the causes of the catastrophe which cost both of them their lives.

³ *Profectio Aug.* (Eckhel, vii. 277). Lampridius (*Alex.* 60) asserts that a Druidess told him, *Gallico sermone*, not to expect victory, and not to rely on his soldiers. The Druids had fallen to the condition of mere fortune-tellers. It is known that Aurelian and Dioeletian consulted them to learn the future.

to avoid war. He proposed peace to the Germans, with gold and presents of all kinds, — greatly to the displeasure of his soldiers, who preferred to keep this gold for themselves. In the army there was at that time a chief named Maximin, a native of the most barbarous part of Thrace. At first a shepherd, he had become a soldier; and his lofty stature and strength attracting attention, he had risen from grade to grade up to the command of the new levies, whose drilling Alexander had confided to him. These recruits were for the most part rough and coarse Pannonians like himself, but wholly devoted to a man who possessed the same merits and the same faults with themselves, and on the contrary filled with contempt for the tranquil virtues of the Emperor. Furthermore, they were of opinion that the reign of Alexander had lasted long enough; that the recent war had impoverished his treasury, the remainder of which the avarice of Mamaea kept under lock and key; that, in short, there would be every advantage in a change of rulers, since the new one would pay richly for his dignity, especially if they should choose Maximin, who, without noble birth or illustrious record, would owe everything to them. Accordingly, they threw a purple mantle over his shoulders and marched in arms towards the Emperor's abode. At their approach, Alexander orders his guards to apprehend the rebel. They hesitate, then refuse, and allow the assassins to enter, who put to death the son and the mother;² or, as Hero-

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.¹

¹ Statue of heroic size, of Greek marble (Museum of Naples).

² In the seventeenth century there was discovered at Rome, near the Porta Maggiore, a sarcophagus which has been supposed to be that of Alexander Severus and Mamaea. The bas-reliefs below the figures of the Emperor and his mother represent: the quarrel of

dian says, "the parsimonious woman and the pusillanimous boy."¹ Some accounts make him die a cowardly death (March 19, 235).

Alexander had reigned thirteen years, though his age was only twenty-six.² He is the last of the Syrian princes. If among them we reckon Severus, on account of the influence exercised over him by Julia Domna, this dynasty had ruled the Empire more than forty years, — a brief space of time, which was marked by great events and bloody tragedies, and during which completely disappeared what was left of the Roman blood and spirit. But for the juriconsults, who preserved the especially Roman science of the law, the customs and beliefs of the time would closely resemble those of an Asiatic monarchy. The Empire is inclining to the Orient, and will soon be lost in it.

Alexander's respect for Abraham and for Jesus, and the former relations of his mother with Origen, had rendered him favorable both to the Jews and the Christians.³ The latter enjoyed during his reign a profound peace and a sort of legal existence. In a dispute which the Church at Rome had with certain innkeepers in the matter of some public land, he pronounced in favor of the Christians. "Better," said he, "that this spot should become a place of prayer than a place of debauchery."⁴ He had been impressed with the manner in which the Church proceeded at its sacerdotal elections, and at one time thought of imitating it for the functions of state.⁵ Of this design there remained, as we have seen, only the invitation given to the people to denounce the

Achilles and Agamemnon; the imprisonment of Chryseis; Achilles preparing to avenge the death of Patroclus; and Priam begging the body of his son. This sarcophagus, represented on the opposite page, contained what is known as the Portland Vase, of blue glass with white ornaments, now in the British Museum.

¹ Julian, in the *Caesars*, repeats this censure.

² Or twenty-nine years and some months, according to Lampridius. There are doubts as to the precise date of his death. Eckhel (vii. 282) inclines to the beginning of July. To the reign of Alexander is referred an inscription of the *Fratres Arvales* describing a curious expiatory sacrifice because the lightning had struck down some trees of the sacred grove of the goddess Dia. Among other victims immolated *ante Caesareum genio d. n. Severi Alexandri Aug.* was found a *taurus auratus*; *item divis num. XX ververices XX*. These *divi* are, from another inscription of the year 183: Augustus, Julia (Livia), Claudius, Poppaea, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Sabina, Antoninus, the elder Faustina, L. Verus, Marcus Aurelius, the younger Faustina, and later, Commodus himself, Pertinax, Severus, and Caracalla (Orelli, No. 961, after Marini, *Atti de' fratelli Arvali*, pl. 43, p. 167).

³ Lamprid., *Alex.* 22.

⁴ *Ibid.* 49. This was the very expression of the Gospel: *Domus mea domus orationis*.

⁵ Lamprid., *Alex.* 45.



HELI DEL Dosso pinxit

Imp A. Leinercier, Paris

DAMBOURGZ chromolith.

THE PORTLAND VASE

FOUND IN THE SARCOPHAGUS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS

The Library
of the
University of Illinois.

crimes of candidates proposed for office. Lampridius asserts that Alexander desired to build a temple to the Christ and enroll him in the ranks of the gods, and that the priests dissuaded him from it, declaring, on the faith of the sacred books, that if he executed this project, the other temples would be abandoned.¹ This might be said to Constantine, but not to the son of Mamaea, since the Christians at that time were not sufficiently numerous to inspire such an apprehension. However, they profited by the tolerance of Alexander to build their first churches, which are shortly afterwards mentioned by Origen.²

Mamaea has also been represented as a Christian. A singular Christian was this Empress, — called on her coins the beneficent Juno, to whom the Senate decreed an apotheosis, and for whom a festival was instituted which the pagans celebrated as late as the fourth century!⁴ Like her son, she desired to hear about the new faith,⁵ and many others had the same curiosity. Eusebius relates that a governor of the province of Arabia requested the Bishop of Alexandria and the prefect of Egypt to send Origen to him to give him information concerning the new doctrines.⁶



COIN OF MAMAEA.³

The reign of this young and unfortunate Emperor, to whom, in spite of his weakness, we must accord a peculiar regard, was therefore the moment when the past and the future, the two great social forces, could come together without mingling, and live in peace until a transformation should be effected.⁷ A practical compromise was at this time not impossible between the Empire, now become disdainful of its old divinities, and a Christianity

¹ *Id.*, *ibid.* 42.

² *In Matth. hom.* xxviii. Origen says that they were burned, — probably during the reign of Maximin.

³ Coin of Mamaea in the likeness of Juno. IVNO CONSERVATRIX. Juno standing, holding a patera and a sceptre ; a peacock is at her feet. Reverse of a silver coin.

⁴ Lamprid., *Alex.* 26. All her medals are pagan.

⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 21.

⁶ *Id.*, *ibid.* vi. 19.

⁷ Zonaras (xii. 16) claims that there were many Christians at the court of Alexander : . . . πολλοὶ κατὰ τοῦ Ἀλ. οἶκον ἦσαν τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπεγνωκότες θεόν. Mangold, *De Ecclesia primaeva pro Caesaribus ac magistratibus rom. preces fundente*, 1881, thinks that in the first two centuries liturgical prayers for the Emperors and magistrates were said in the Christian communities.

which would have been respectful towards the established order, — the one accepting religious tolerance as its rule of government, the other, satisfied with the liberty allowed it, continuing peacefully to win souls, but not gaining power by violence; making conquest of the world by virtue of moral truth, and not as a victorious party establishing itself by force in the positions whence it has dislodged its adversaries. Unhappily, the revolutions of this world are not thus wisely effected. The spirit of Tertullian has replaced in the Church that of Clement, and in the State the violent will also succeed the peaceful. On both sides, force will be employed, — by Diocletian, in the name of the gods; by the successors of Constantine, in the name of Christ; and the Empire will be shaken to its foundations.

¹ This Medusa is carved on the outside of the famous cup of Oriental sardonyx known as the Tassa Farnese. It was found near the Castle of Saint Angelo (Hadrian's Tomb) or at the Tiburtine Villa, and is now in the Museum of Naples.



MEDUSA, OR AEGIS.¹

T W E L F T H P E R I O D.

MILITARY ANARCHY (235-268 A. D.). BEGINNING OF THE DECLINE.

CHAPTER XCIV.

SEVEN EMPERORS IN FOURTEEN YEARS (235-249 A.D.).

I. — MAXIMIN (235-238); GORDIAN I. AND GORDIAN II.; PUPIENUS
AND BALBINUS (238).

AS the Roman aristocracy and the provincial nobles abandoned military service, the Barbarian youth entered it, and, reaching the higher grades, were masters of the troops and, consequently, of the Empire. Thus came to power a Thracian, in whose veins flowed the blood of many Barbaric races.

Caius Julius Verus Maximinus by his father's side belonged to the Getae; by his mother's, to the Alani. When Severus, on his return from Asia in the year 202, traversed Thrace, he celebrated, on occasion of a festival, the usual military games. Maximin, whose herculean strength had made him famous among his comrades, was matched against some of the Emperor's attendants, and overthrew sixteen of them in succession. This prowess gained him the honor of being at once enlisted in the army. Three days later, seeing the Emperor pass on horseback at full gallop, he kept pace with him on foot. Severus continued the race for some time, then proposed to him, fatigued as he was, to take part in a wrestling match. Without any hesitation, Maximin threw seven of the most active soldiers one after another; and upon this received the gold collar and was admitted to the guards. The new Ajax, who was as brave as he was strong, rose rapidly through the grades; but

would serve neither under Macrinus, who had killed the son of his benefactor, nor under Elagabalus, whom he despised, — two praiseworthy sentiments which should be set down to his credit. He re-entered the army in the reign of Alexander, who made

MAXIMIN.¹MAXIMUS, SON OF MAXIMIN.²

him tribune, with the rank of senator. The rest of the story is well known. Discontented with an Emperor whom his mother held in leading-strings, the troops were eager to have a true soldier at their head, and they made choice of the man who possessed all the physical qualities of one, — strength, agility, and dexterity.³ His

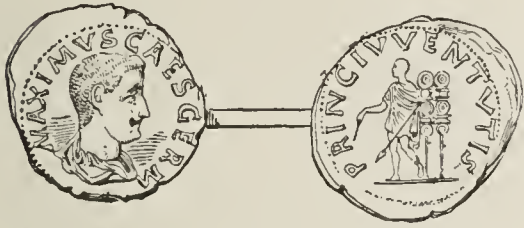
¹ Heroic statue, the antique head preserved. (Luni marble; from the Museum of Naples.)

² Statue of Greek marble, the antique head restored.

³ I make no mention of the extravagant stories of his strength and voracity. They are credible only on the supposition that Maximin was a morbid case of polyphagy, of which Létourneau gives such curious instances in his *Physiologie des passions*.

son Maximus, not yet twenty years of age,¹ was saluted Caesar and Prince of the Roman youth.

The extraordinary fortune to which Maximin had attained did not remove from his mind the consciousness of his own unworthiness, and placed him in an attitude of hostility towards all who possessed what he had never had, — ancestors, a name, education, and wealth. He dared not appear in Rome. This city full of



MAXIMUS, CAESAR AND PRINCE OF THE YOUTH.²

glorious memories, this Senate of which he was not yet a member,³ an assembly remaining still the shadow of a great reality, intimidated the Barbarian. The friends and councillors of Alexander, all his household, and among this number many Christians, were at once put to death; soon after, a conspiracy, real or feigned, cost the life of Magnus, a man of consular rank, and of several other persons.⁴ In the army were many troops of African and Asiatic origin, — Osrhoenian and Armenian archers, Moors armed with javelins, Parthians who had fled from the Persian dominion; and all were devoted to the dynasty which had arisen out of Leptis and Emesa. The favorite of the Pannonians and the murderer of Alexander was doubly odious to them; it was their desire to overthrow him and proclaim as Emperor, against his will, an ex-consul, whom one of his friends assassinated through spite at not having had the preference himself. This murder broke up the rebellion; new victims fell, and Maximin made haste to seek sanction for his power by gaining a victory over the Germans.



GERMANS CONCEALING THEMSELVES AMONG RUSHES.⁵

¹ Maximus was killed in his eighteenth or in his twenty-first year (Capit., *Max.* 1).

² MAXIMVS CAES. GERM., around the bare head of the prince. On the reverse, PRINC. IVVENTVTIS. Maximus standing, holding a wand and a javelin; behind, two standards. (Silver coin. Cohen, No. 4.)

³ *Neque ipse senator esset* (Eutrop., ix. 1).

⁴ Capitolinus says four thousand (*Max.* 10).

⁵ From the Column of Antoninus.

These Barbarians made no resistance to a serious attack. Abandoning to the Romans their harvests and their wooden houses, which were at once set on fire, they took refuge in the depths of forests, whither they believed the legions would not dare to follow them, and in marshes through which they alone knew the way. Maximin, however, pursued them into these retreats, killed a considerable number of them, and sent to the Senate, with his letters announcing the victory, a picture representing himself as fighting surrounded by enemies, while the horse upon which he sits is half-



MAXIMINUS GERMANICUS.¹

buried in the mud. He asserted that he had ravaged the country over a space of four hundred miles. Other wars, of which we have no particulars, gave him the titles of Dacicus and Sarmaticus. From Sirmium, which he had made the centre of his

operations, he commanded the line of the Carpathians, and proposed to penetrate as far as the Northern seas: this son of the Goths was desirous of crushing that Barbaric world whence he had himself emerged.²

A design like this, and a life passed in the camps of the Danube in rigorous climates, give the man a certain savage grandeur. But the senators left idle in the curia, the languid dwellers in Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, who from the recesses of their luxurious villas could not discern the perils that the North concealed in its mysterious depths, and the populace, deprived of their wonted pleasures, were indignant at the affront offered to the imperial purple. Maximin was called the Cyclops, the Busiris, the wild beast; men openly desired his death, and in the theatre verses were declaimed like these: "The elephant is huge, but men kill him; the lion is strong, but men kill him; the tiger is terrible, but men kill him. Beware of all, thou who fearest none; for what one alone cannot do, many together can." The rude soldier gave back contempt for contempt to the effeminate revilers whose

¹ Laurelled head of Maximin. On the reverse, Maximin and his son, standing, holding a Victory. Between them, two kneeling captives. (Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.)

² In 256 he assumed the title of Germanicus (Eckhel, vii. 291). His victories over the Germans belong therefore to that year.

hands could not grasp the sword, to these crowds living on charity and public games, who had never seen other blood flow than that of gladiators, while the Emperor replied by sentences of death to those who insulted him. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Empress, who strove vainly to soften his savage disposition,¹ murders and confiscations multiplied, and hatred increased against the Thracian who dared to say openly that an Empire like that of Rome could be governed only by the most relentless severity.

This hatred Maximin discerned everywhere, even amidst flatteries; and his cruelty only increased in consequence. The very persons who had aided his fortunes became guilty of having known his humble beginnings, and he caused these embarrassing witnesses of his obscurity to disappear. As there was safety for him nowhere except with the army, he gorged it with gold; and the public treasury not furnishing enough, he pillaged cities and temples, coined the statues of the gods into money, and confiscated the funds set apart for games and distributions. Citizens were cut down while endeavoring to defend the statues of their gods. A catastrophe was becoming inevitable, and an eclipse of the sun which occurred at this time was believed to announce it.

About the middle of February, 238,² an insurrection of peasants broke out in Africa. One of the most obnoxious of the agents of this fiscal tyranny, the procurator of the province of Carthage, had condemned many landowners of Thysdrus to fines which were ruinous to them. They applied for a delay of three days, and employed that time in calling in from the adjacent country their husbandmen, who entered the city by night, armed with clubs and hatchets concealed under their clothing. At break of day the conspirators with this band attacked the dwelling of the procurator.

¹ Amm. Marellinus, xiv. 1.

² This period presents chronological difficulties, which have however been removed by Eckhel (vii. 293-95) and Borghesi (*Sull' imp. Pupiano*, in his Works, v. 488 *et seq.*), and especially by L. Renier. In the latter's memoir upon the inscriptions of the Gordians he establishes, moreover, that Capellianus was in command in Numidia, and not, as has been always believed, in Mauretania; that the Third Augustan legion was disbanded after its defeat; that the true name of Balbinus was Decimus Caelius Galvinus Balbinus (no inscription had given it until that of Bouhira, recently discovered); that, finally, a rescript inserted in the *Code* (ii. 10, 2) proves that Pupienus and Balbinus were dead by the tenth before the kalends of July (June 22). In the reorganization of Africa by Gordian III. the Numidian lieutenantcy was suppressed, and Caesarian Mauretania became, and remained until the time of Valerian, a praetorian province, governed by a legate who commanded the entire army in the African provinces.

killed him, and then hastening to the dwelling of the procursul, who was at this time in Thysdrus, they invested him with a purple robe, and, in spite of his reluctance, proclaimed him Augustus. Gordian was the person of highest rank in the Empire. He was said to be a descendant of the Gracchi; his mother, Ulpia Gordiana, belonged to the family of Trajan, and his wife was the



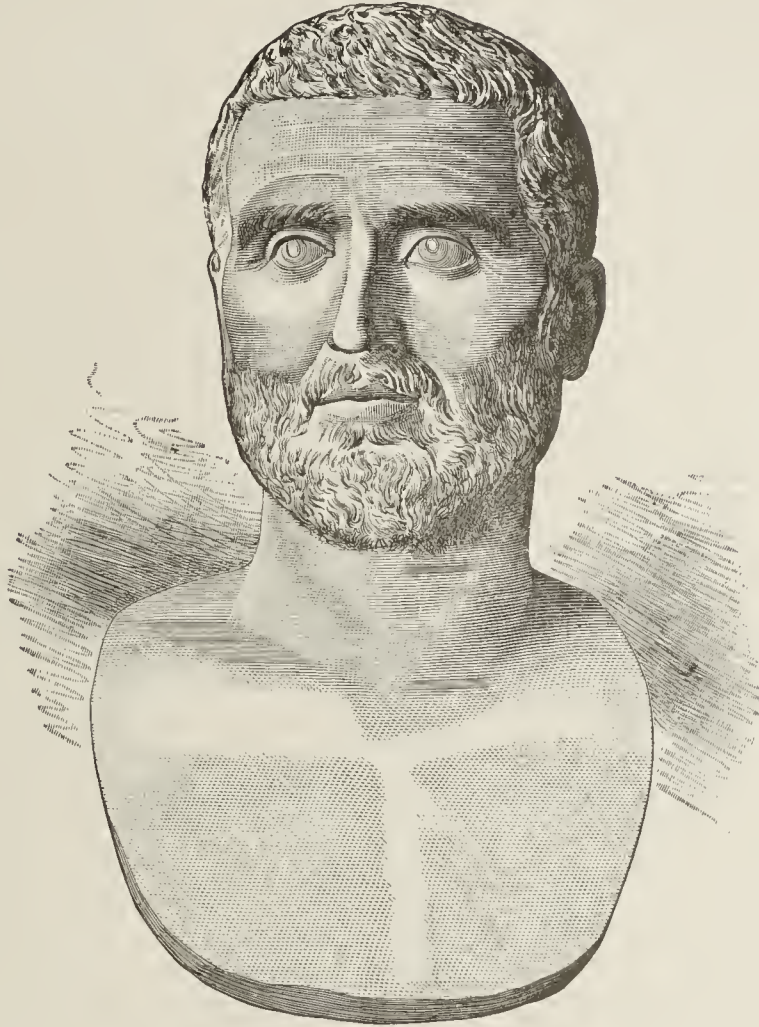
THYSDRUS (EL-DJEM).¹

great-granddaughter of Antoninus Pius. He was, moreover, a scholar, a poet, and a man of integrity; he had immense wealth, but he was eighty years of age, and — content with having passed through so many revolutions without loss of life or fortune — this assiduous reader of Plato and Aristotle, of Cicero and Vergil,²

¹ View of a circular gallery in the amphitheatre or colosseum.

² Gordian had composed a poetical Antoniniad. Capitolinus thus describes one of his palaces: "In their villa, which yet stands upon the Praenestine road, may be seen a tetrastyle

would have been glad to end his days peacefully. But the choice was not allowed him. Moreover, to touch the imperial purple, though but for a moment, was to be like him of old who laid hand upon the Ark,—his life must be the penalty.



THE ELDER GORDIAN.¹

Gordian accepted; and Carthage, which had not seen an Emperor since Hadrian, received with transport the new Augustus. He associated with himself his son, who had been one of his lieutenants, and immediately despatched messengers to Rome with letters for

temple of two hundred columns, of which fifty are of Carystian marble, fifty of Claudian, and fifty of Numidian; there are also three basilicas a hundred feet in length, and *thermae*, which are surpassed in beauty only by those of Rome" (*Gord.*, 32). "While aedile, Gordian gave at his own expense twelve spectacles, one each month, where gladiators in number from three hundred to a thousand were engaged. On one occasion he let loose in the amphitheatre a hundred wild beasts of Libya; another time, a thousand bears. At the August games he furnished to the populace two hundred stags, thirty wild horses, ten elands, a hundred Cyprus bulls, three hundred ostriches, thirty wild asses a hundred and fifty wild boars, two hundred chamois, and two hundred deer" (*Ibid.* 3).

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 64.

the consuls, the Senate, the people, and the praetorians, together with assassins to murder the praetorian prefect, the pitiless agent of Maximin's cruelties. The false report was to be spread in the



THE YOUNGER GORDIAN.¹

city that Maximin had been murdered in the camp in Pannonia. The prefect, being attacked unawares, was stabbed in his own tribunal. In his letter to the Senate, Gordian declared that he would submit to the decision of that august assembly. Since the

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 65.

time of the true Antonines the Conscript Fathers had not heard language like this. It gave them courage; and without waiting to see whether the imperial offices were really vacant, they decreed them to the two Gordians, father and son, in secret session¹ (March, 238). The people were for once of the same mind with the Senate: a ruler who scorned to come to Rome appeared to them false to all his duties. They rejoiced, therefore, at the report of Maximin's death, and welcomed with acclamations the Emperor whom the Fathers had given them. The revolution would have failed of its chief interest if it had been on paper only; a sanguinary reaction struck down the officers and partisans of the Thracian, together with the informers who had served his cruelty. Men of all ranks availed themselves of this pretext to rid themselves of their personal enemies, and debtors to murder their creditors. The prefect of the city perished in one of these tumults.



UNIQUE INSCRIPTION OF THE ELDER GORDIAN.²

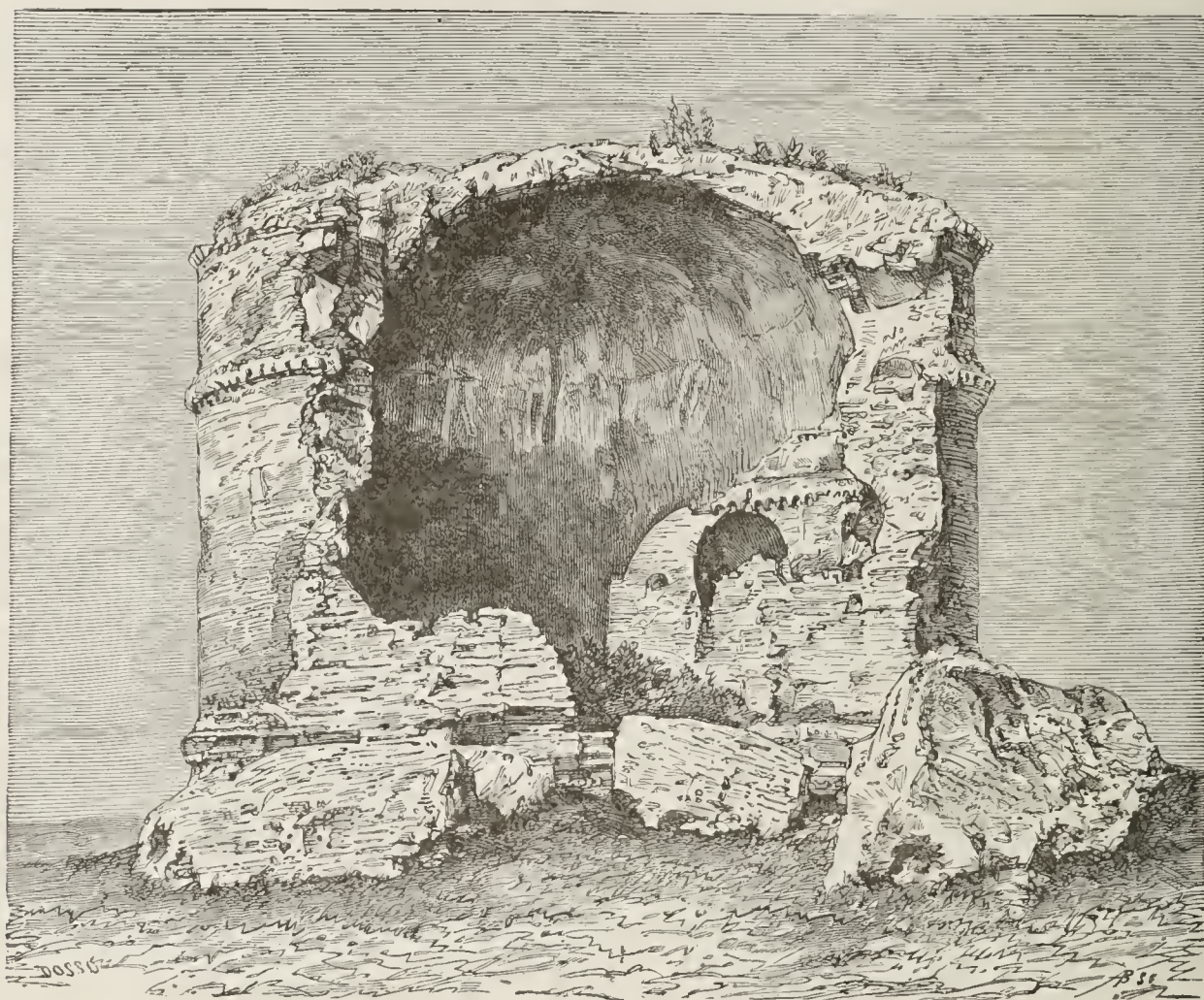
Meanwhile messengers had been sent out to communicate to the provinces the movement which had begun at Rome and Carthage. Despatches, written in the name of the Senate and the Roman people, called upon the nations to succor the common country. and acknowledge the two rulers who had just freed the world of a wild beast.³ Maximin at first ridiculed these new "Carthaginians," and promised his soldiers that this revolt of the Senate should give them rich booty. There was, in truth, nothing of Hannibal in the Carthage of the time; and when the Numidian legate, Capellianus, arrived from Lambesa and Thevestes with his legion,

¹ For a *senatus-consultum tacitum*, the secretaries and attendants — all, in fact, who were not senators — went out of the curia, and the members of the Senate themselves prepared the reports and decrees.

² From the restoration by M. Ch. Robert, in vol. iv. of *Mémoires de la Société archéolog. of Bordeaux*. (Museum of Bordeaux.)

³ The letter is addressed: *Proconsulibus, praesidibus, legatis, ducibus, tribunis, magistratibus, ac singulis civitatibus, et municipiis et oppidis et vicis et castellis* (Capit., Max. 15). The two Maximins were at the same time declared public enemies, and a reward was offered to any person who should kill them (*Ibid.* 16).

the Third Augustan, the citizens who had come out to oppose him gave way at sight of the Numidian horse, and in their precipitate flight crushed one another in the gates of the city.¹ The younger Gordian was killed, and his aged father in despair took his own life; the two had reigned a few days over a month. This news struck consternation at Rome. Embarked in so terrible an enter-



RUINS OF THE TOMB OF THE GORDIANS.²

prise, the Senate could not draw back; it was compelled to be either the victim or the executioner.

Ideas which later were more fully developed had begun at this time to germinate. In the time of Caracalla, Herodian had believed that a division of the Empire was possible. In the deliberation which took place after the arrival of the news from Africa, a senator proposed the appointment of two Emperors, — one

¹ Capitolinus (*Max.* 19) speaks, however, of an *acerrima pugna*.

² From a photograph by Parker.

to remain at Rome and have charge of civil affairs, the other to be with the army for the direction of military operations: we have here the rough sketch of Diocletian's system. The proposal was well received, and the Senate proclaimed two Augusti, — Pupienus,¹ a military man, and Balbinus, who had won honor in the civil career. To render their powers absolutely equal, the office and title of pontifex maximus, which had never before been shared, was given to both; also the two Gordians were pronounced *divi*.

A great crowd had gathered outside the Capitol, where the Senate was in session. At the news of the decision a violent clamor was raised, especially against Pupienus, who, as governor of the city, had severely repressed those infractions of the public order that the lower classes so readily commit

THE TWO GORDIANS.²

or excuse. Accordingly, when the new Emperors, with their suite, attempted to take possession of the imperial palace, they were driven back into the Capitol. As the Gordians were extremely rich,

they had many adherents, who had expected to derive advantage for themselves from the reign of the new dynasty. Of this family there remained a boy, — grandson, through his mother, of the proconsul of Africa,³ — who was now in Rome.

Upon the elevation of his grandfather and uncle, the Senate had given him the praetorship and the

SILVER COIN OF GORDIAN III., CAESAR.⁴

¹ Their names were: M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus, and Decimus Caelius Balbinus. The latter claimed descent from Balbus, the Spaniard, the friend of Pompey and Caesar.

² Medallion of bronze of the two Gordians, proclaimed *divi*, struck at Aegae, in Cilicia, confirming the apotheosis decreed by the Senate: *Quos ambo senatus augustos appellavit, et postea inter divos retulit*. On the obverse, the laurelled heads of the two Gordians facing each other; the legend (in Greek): The Divine Gordiani, the venerable Roman, African, Augusti. On the reverse, an eagle upon an altar, and: The inhabitants of Aegae, Severiani, Hadriani, the neocoros city (having a temple of the Augusti), the navarchia (having a marine arsenal), in the year of Aegae 284 (238 A. D.).

³ An Algerian inscription (L. Renier, No. 1,431) calls him *divi Gordiani nepos et divi Gordiani sororis filius*. To the same effect, Herodian, vii. 27.

⁴ Silver coin, bearing on the reverse the legend: PIETAS AVGG. (Cohen, No. 73.)

title of Caesar, although he was but twelve years of age. After the African disaster, men were needed, and this boy was forgotten. But those whose interests were concerned did not forget



BALBINUS.¹

him; they instigated the mob, who by their clamor forced the Senate to renew the decree naming the young Gordian Caesar.

Rome had therefore three Emperors; but she had also civil war. Maximin had left in the city only a few praetorian vete-

¹ Bust of the Capitol.

rans; and this soldiery, whose insolence we have often mentioned, was always regarded with ill-will by the nobles and the populace. One day two of these soldiers, unarmed and as spectators, entering the temple where the Conscript Fathers were deliberating, passed beyond the altar of Victory,—a serious breach of etiquette. It



MAXIMIN.¹

may be that to this offence they added some insolence of demeanor, or possibly even some threatening language in their Emperor's name: the exact offence is not known; but an exasperated senator stabbed them both, then rushing out into the open square, held up his bloody dagger, exclaiming that these enemies of the Senate and of the Roman people must perish. The crowd fell upon the praetorians who chanced to be in the city; many were killed, and the remainder

¹ Bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

shut themselves up in their camp, which the gladiators belonging to the nobles vainly sought to carry by assault. The veterans made a strong resistance, and at times sallied out, making great



PUPIENUS.¹

slaughter among their assailants. To restore peace, Balbinus spared neither edicts nor entreaties; but he was driven out of the fray with sticks and stones,—without, however, receiving any intentional injury. The affair was a private quarrel between town and camp,

¹ Bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

of a kind frequently seen before and since, in military governments. The citizens finally cut off the water-supply of the camp, hoping thereby to force the praetorians to open their gates. The latter did indeed open them; but it was to fall upon the mob with levelled pikes, and pursue them into the city, where the fight went on. Assailed in the narrow streets by stones hurled from the roofs, the praetorians set fire to the houses; and while the conflagration raged, soldiers and populace became reconciled, uniting to plunder whatever the flames had spared. A great part of the city was thus destroyed.

Maximin now found himself in the position in which Severus had been forty-five years before; but he did not show the prudence of the African Emperor, and his army, having no supplies awaiting them along the road, advanced slowly. It is true that the disposition of the provincials was no longer the same: the inhabitants fled at the approach of Maximin and his Barbarians, and there were neither men nor provisions left in the cities which he entered.¹

The Senate had time, therefore, to raise troops in Italy, to fortify positions, and to cut the roads. The fleet of Ravenna had carried off or destroyed all the coasting vessels, and allowed no supplies to arrive by way of the Adriatic for the army of Pannonia.² Twenty men of consular rank divided Italy among themselves, making it, so to speak, a fortress; and from Ravenna, where he had collected his army, Pupienus directed the movements of all. This city, the Venice of the Romans, afforded him an excellent strategic position. Thence he kept guard over Upper Italy and the lower course of its two great rivers, the Po and the Adige; his fleet gave him communication with Aquileia, and he covered the road to Rome. The Italians cordially aided his preparations; they felt that they were about to fight for the old renown of Italy against a fresh invasion of the Cimbri. The gods were made to speak: in Aquileia the auspices declared that Belenus promised success.³ Moreover, good news came in from the provinces. Most of them had declared for the Senate, and the legions which remained faithful, especially those of the Rhine, where Pupienus had been in command, sent detachments which enabled him to

¹ *Sublatis omnibus quae victum praeberere possent* (Capit., *Max.* 21).

² Capit., *Max.* 23.

³ *Id.*, *ibid.* 22; Herod., viii. 7.

officer a considerable number of recruits. In Africa, Capellianus, after his victory at Carthage, had pillaged the province to enrich his soldiers, to prepare his own way to the imperial power if Maximin should be overthrown.¹ But the governor of Mauretania



SARCOPHAGUS OF A CENTURION OF THE THIRD AUGUSTAN LEGION.²

defeated and killed him; the Third Augustan legion was disbanded, its name effaced from the monuments it had erected, and the other troops were sent into Rhaetia.³ Maximin therefore remained isolated.⁴

¹ Capit., *Max.* 19. Cf. L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* No. 3,177.

² White marble, found among the tombs along the Appian Way. (From the Museum of the Louvre.) It represents eleven Loves forging arms, in allusion to the employment of the centurion: BLAERA VITALIS > [centurio] LEG. III. AVG. B. M. M. D. [*Bene Merenti Mater Dedit?*]. (*C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 3,645.) "The artists of the Roman epoch were accustomed to treat religious traditions lightly, and attribute to Loves or to children certain occupations which in reality belong only to grown men. In this class of ideas the sarcophagus under consideration is one of the most instructive" (Fröhner, *Notice*, etc., No. 341, and p. 321; also Henry d'Eseamps, *Descr. des marbres du Musée Camp.* pl. 108).

³ This legion was reconstituted, about the year 253, in the reign of Valerian, whom it, with the whole Rhaetian army, had aided in obtaining the imperial power.

⁴ . . . *Orbem terrarum consensisse in odium Maximini* (Capit., *Max.* 23).

When he reached the banks of the Isonzo, the torrent, swelled by the melting of the snows, rolled broad and rapid, and the fine stone bridge which spanned it had been broken down. Here the army was detained for several days while rafts were constructed from casks and planks found in the deserted houses.

On the opposite side, some miles distant from the stream, was Aquileia, the real gateway into Italy on the northeast. Whether Maximin took it, or whether its inhabitants allowed him to traverse it with his famished hordes, in either case the great and wealthy city would be ruined. Accordingly, these descendants of Roman colonists resolved to make a desperate resistance. They closed the gaps in their walls, amassed immense quantities of provisions, and forged weapons and engines of war. The women, copying famous examples, gave their hair to make rope,—an act consecrated by a temple built in Rome to the Venus of the shaven head. Two ex-consuls—one formerly a *dux* in Moesia and a very able soldier—conducted the defence. There were but few troops in the city; but all the inhabitants enrolled themselves as a garrison, and the bravest men from the adjacent country had thrown themselves into the place.

All the attacks made upon the city were unsuccessful; all attempts to take it by storm failed; a rain of burning pitch arrested the advance of the hostile columns, and blazing darts shot from the balistae on the walls set on fire the siege-machines. Maximin avenged himself for these repeated defeats by putting to death the officers who had so unsuccessfully conducted the operations. Great indignation was aroused at these unjust punishments; provisions, moreover, were lacking, the army saw neither supplies nor succor come to it, the whole Empire appeared to be hostile, and the Emperor was not one of those leaders who give their soldiers courage to fight against a world.

The legionaries of the Second Parthica were the most uneasy. Their wives and children and all that they possessed, being left at Albanum, were at the mercy of the enemy. To save their own families, the soldiers murdered Maximin and his son. This Emperor's reign had lasted three years and a few days (238).¹

¹ Maximin was sixty-five years of age (*Chron. d'Alex., ad ann. 238*, and Zonaras, *Ann.* xii. 16). The ecclesiastical writers (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 28) place in his reign a persecution, which they call the sixth. Sulpicius Severus makes no mention of this; he speaks only

The army then demanded entrance into the city; but the people of Aquileia would not agree to this proposal. They let down provisions from their walls, requiring pay for them, and also opened markets at their gates; and the strange sight was seen of the besieged supplying their besiegers with food. Pupienus, coming



EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF AN EMPEROR CROWNED WITH LAUREL.¹

in all haste from Ravenna to this army destitute of a chief, received their oaths of fidelity to the three Emperors of Rome, and sent the troops away to their encampments, after having, as was usual, paid liberally the price of blood.

While these events were taking place the Senate had lived from day to day in the anxiety of a man who sees the knife at his throat.

(*Hist. sacr.* ii. 16) of a few priests who were persecuted . . . *Nonnullarum ecclesiarum clericos vexavit*. The persecution was probably limited to some local oppression; in Cappadocia, for instance, of which Firmilianus was bishop. Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.* 75: *Erat transeundi facultas eo quod persecutio illa non per totum mundum, sed localis fuisset . . . ut per Cappadociam et Pontum*; and the Church has no authentic martyrs in this reign. Eusebius mentions not one.

¹ Guattani, 1786, and Clarac, pl. 967, No. 2,497.

Therefore their joy was as extreme as had been their terror, and they testified it by a great display of gratitude towards the gods and the Emperors,—to the former, solemn thanksgivings and hecatombs of victims; to the latter,—victors without a battle,—trophies, triumphal chariots, gilded equestrian statues, and, by way of novelty, statues carried by elephants.

When the noise of the acclamations had ceased, and the flames of the sacrifices died away, Pupienus calmly examined the situation, and found it still full of danger. “What do you expect will be our recompense for having delivered Rome from a monster?” he asked his colleague. “The love of the people, of the Senate, and of the whole human race,” Balbinus replied with simplicity. “Our recompense will be,” the old general said, “the hatred of the soldiers.” And this anticipation was well founded.



PUPIENUS AND THE PUBLIC PEACE.¹

The two Emperors at first lived on terms of cordial friendliness. To attest their harmony, they caused coins to be struck representing two hands clasped, with the legend: *Patres senatus, amor mutuus*; also this: *Fides mutua*.² But Balbinus regarded Pupienus with contempt on account of his obscure birth, the latter despised his colleague's weakness, and after a few days distrust sprang up between them. It was hardly possible that the combination devised by the Senate could have had any other result, or that this result should not bring about a catastrophe. The praetorians with silent displeasure endured “the Senate's Emperors;” and their hatred increased with the homage paid by the Conscript Fathers to the men of their own choice. The soldiers feared lest there might be employed against them the same measures which Severus had adopted in the case of the praetorians of Julianus. In a *senatus-consultum* these imprudent words had been used: “Thus act those



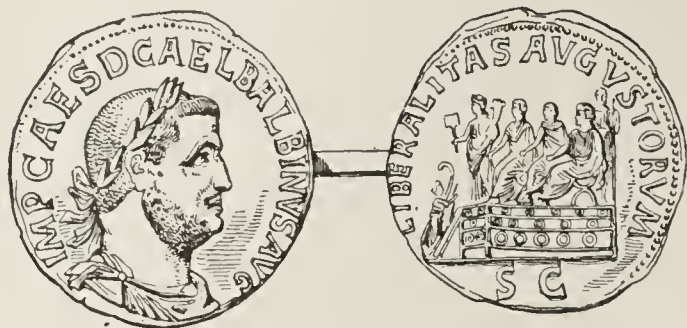
SILVER COIN OF PUPIENUS.³

¹ IMP. CAES. PVPIEN[us] MAXIMVS AVG., around the laurelled head of the Emperor. On the reverse, PAX PVBLICA SC. and Peace, seated. (Large bronze.)

² Eckhel, vii. 305.

³ Two hands clasped, with the legend: PATRAS SENATVS.

rulers appointed by wise men; thus perish the rulers chosen by the inexperienced.”¹ This was an insult, and the soldiers took it



LARGE BRONZE OF BALBINUS.²

up. On an occasion when some public games had drawn away from the palace a large number of its usual guards, the praetorians hastened thither. Pupienus was anxious at once to summon the German guard.

Balbinus, suspecting treachery on the part of his colleague, refused to allow it to be sent for. While the two Emperors were disputing, the praetorians forced the gates, seized them both, and dragged them through the city with every insult, crying: “Behold the Emperors of the Senate and the Roman people!”³ It was their intention to carry their prisoners to the camp and put them to death with slow tortures. But the German guard coming up, the praetorians murdered the two Emperors at once, and left their dead bodies in the open street (June, 238).

Less than five months had sufficed for the triple tragedy of which Rome, Carthage, and the camp of Aquileia had been the theatre. The senatorial restoration had lasted just long enough to give the soldiery time to recover from the surprise this audacious attempt had caused them, and could last no longer, for the Senate had neither material nor moral force; the power was elsewhere. From Commodus to Diocletian, the true masters of the Empire were the soldiers; and the evils of this domination were only for the moment averted when the army had at its head chiefs at once

¹ Herod., viii. 21.

² IMP. CAES. D[ecimus] CAEL[ivus] BALBINVS AVG., and the laurelled head of Balbinus. On the reverse, LIBERALITAS AVGVSTORVM SC. Balbinus, Pupienus, and Gordian III. seated on a platform. Liberalitas standing; a citizen ascending the steps.

³ With the reign of Pupienus and Balbinus ends the work of Herodian, which, notwithstanding all its faults, is very useful for this epoch, so poor in historians. In the year 238 we find the publication of the book by Censorinus, *De Die natali*. About this time also Commodianus, the oldest of the Christian poets, wrote his *Instructions*, — eighty pieces of barbarous verse. His *Carmen apologeticum* belongs to the year 249. Gennadius (*De Script. eccles.* 15) says of this author: . . . *Scripsit, mediocri sermone quasi versu, librum adversus paganos. Et quia parum nostrarum attigerat litterarum, magis illorum destruere potuit dogmata quam nostra firmare.* The initial letters of the twenty-six last verses form these words: *Commodianus mendicus Christi*. Another of these aerosties, in barbarous prosody and metre, is found in an Algerian inscription (L. Renier, No. 2,074).



HEROIC STATUE OF PAPIUS (MUSEUM OF THE LOUVRE).

The Library
of the
University of Illinois

able and strong, like Severus, Aurelian, and Probus. The organization of the Empire was such that it required for prosperity a strong hand always at the helm; but Nature is not so lavish of great men, and human wisdom had not by good institutions supplied what Nature did not give.

II. — GORDIAN III. (238–244).

WITHIN a few months six Emperors had perished, and only a boy was left, Gordian III.¹ The murderers carried him away with them to the camp. Not long before, they had made him Caesar through hatred of Pupienus and Balbinus; now that he was left alone, they proclaimed him Augustus: a ruler twelve or thirteen years old was the chief who suited them best. The Empire, wearied out with so many tumults, remained tranquil for a few years. There is mentioned only an insurrection in Africa, which was quickly suppressed by the governor of Caesarian Mauretania (240).² But affairs at court went badly. Gordian II. had had as many as twenty-two concubines; to guard this harem he had adopted the Oriental method of employing



GORDIAN III.³

¹ "He is said by most authorities to have been eleven years of age, but some consider him thirteen, and Junius Cordus believes that he was sixteen" (Capit., *Gord.* 22).

² L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* 99, and *C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,090.

³ Luni marble; bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

eunuchs, and his nephew came into possession of this dangerous household. Ill-defended by his mother against them and against the freedmen, Gordian allowed them to be masters of the palace and the treasury, which they plundered at will. Their sway lasted till 241 or 242; at this period the young Emperor married Tranquillina, the daughter of Timesitheus, and appointed his father-in-law praetorian prefect.¹

This Timesitheus, who had filled with integrity important financial positions, and many times served as governor of a province



THE EMPRESS TRANQUILLINA AS CERES.²

(*vice praesidis*), proved to be a man of much ability; and he thrust back into obscurity those who ought never to have emerged thence. One of his letters to Gordian shows the extent of the evil and the vigor of the remedy: "To Augustus, my master and my son, Timesitheus his father-in-law and prefect. We rejoice to see that you have escaped from the disgrace of the period when eunuchs and men whom you regarded as friends trafficked infamously in all things. Our rejoicing is the greater in that you yourself applaud this fortunate change, which proves also, my respected son, that you were not to blame for these abuses. It could not indeed be endured longer that eunuchs should dispose of military commands; that honorable services should be left unrewarded;

that the caprice or interest of a few men should cause the innocent to perish, and leave the guilty at liberty; that the treasury should be emptied by those who were constantly scheming to prejudice

¹ C. Furius Sabinius Aquila Timesitheus (Spon, *Antiq. de Lyon*, edition of 1857, p. 163). See his *cursus honorum* in De Boissieu's *Inscr. de Lyon*, p. 245.

² Statue in the Museum of the Louvre; Parian marble.

you against the best citizens, who were bringing the wicked forward and driving good men away, and trafficked in the very words that they themselves ascribed to you. Let us therefore thank the gods who have given you the will to heal the woes of the state. It is pleasing to be the father-in-law of a ruler who seeks to understand all things, and drives from his presence the men by whom he himself seemed formerly to be offered for public sale."

To this letter Gordian replied: "The Emperor Gordianus Augustus to Timesitheus, his father and prefect. If the mighty gods did not protect the Roman Empire, we should still be, as it were, exposed for sale by the eunuchs, themselves bought in the public markets. I at last understand that it is not a Felix whom I ought to have placed at the head of the praetorian cohorts, nor a Serapammon in command of the Fourth legion, and—not to enumerate in detail—that I ought not to have done many things that I have done. But I render thanks to the gods that you, whose fidelity is well known, have taught me what the captivity in which I was held had prevented me from understanding. What could I do when Maurus sold the government, and when, acting in concert with



COIN OF TRANQUILLINA.²

Gaudianus, Reverendus, and Montanus, he praised some men and blamed others? What could I do but approve what he had told me, it being also confirmed by the testimony of his accomplices? In truth, my dear father, an Emperor is very unfortunate when the truth is concealed from him. He cannot go out and learn it for himself, and he is obliged to hear what he is told, and to decide according to the information men bring him."

Timesitheus was not only renowned for his eloquence and integrity, but also, when the occasion required, he could show himself a good general. He caused the fortifications of cities and frontiers to be repaired, and collected vast quantities of provisions

¹ SABINIA TRANQVILLINA AVG., surrounding the bust of the Empress. On the reverse, FELICITAS TEMPORVM SC. Felicitas standing.

in these strongholds, so that the armies could be supplied from them in case of need. The posts of the first importance were supplied with a year's stores of corn, salted pork, vinegar, barley, and straw; and the rest with supplies for one or two months. He examined the arsenals, and made sure that the weapons



PROVISION AND BAGGAGE WAGONS.¹

in the soldiers' hands were in good order. He sent away from the camps all useless persons, old men and children, who hindered the movements of the troops and consumed the rations. Discipline was the more easily maintained because he watched



COIN OF SHAPUR OR SAPOR I.²

with the utmost vigilance over the needs of the soldier, and even in the most remote marches secured the seasonable arrival of provisions. He also revived the old usage of surrounding the most temporary camps with a ditch; and visiting the outposts

often, even during the night, he kept watch upon the conduct of all. In a short time a man like this, able and devoted to the public welfare, restored their military virtues to the troops, and the army again became the formidable weapon that it had so long been.

¹ From a bas-relief of the Antonine Column.

² Bust of Sapor, with legend: The worshipper of Ormuzd. On the reverse, a pyre between two standing figures; legend: Chapouri. (Gold coin.)

The Persians quickly perceived what had taken place. Satisfied or exhausted by the first collision in the reign of Alexander Severus, they had remained tranquil until about the close of Maximin's reign; but new Asiatic dynasties do not at once abandon the tent for the harem. To consolidate their power, they need from time to time to give scope to the warlike ardor which brought them into existence. Ardishir again threatened Armenia and the Roman provinces. Upon his death in 240 he was succeeded by his son Shapur, or Sapor, who for a third of a century (240-273) remained the indefatigable enemy of the Romans. This monarch led in person a formidable invasion, which penetrated into the heart of Syria. He took the strong cities of Atræ, Nisibis, and Carrhae, crossed the Euphrates, and menaced Antioch.² At news of this, Gordian opened the temple of Janus (241),³ — a ceremony which seems then to have occurred for the last time, — and with a large army set out for the valley of the Danube, which the Sarmatians and Goths had been ravaging for four years;⁴ the Alani had even advanced as far as the neighborhood of Philippopolis in Thrace, where they defeated a Roman force. The Barbarians could not make any stand against the large army led by Gordian, which drove away these pillagers as it advanced.⁵



COIN OF GORDIAN III.¹

In 242 the Emperor crossed the Hellespont and moved forward rapidly towards the Euphrates.

The Persian cavalry offered no better resistance than the Goths had done; but the history of these engagements is lost. We have only a few lines in a despatch from the Emperor to the Senate: "After the many advantages gained upon our march, each one of which merits the honor of a triumph, we have broken the yoke already placed upon the neck of Antioch, and have deliv-

¹ Coin commemorating the crossing of the Hellespont by the Emperor. Reverse of a medium bronze of Gordian III., with the legend *TRAIECTVS AVG*. Gordian is seated in the prow of a praetorian galley, around which three dolphins are swimming. At the present day shoals of porpoises follow vessels in the Hellespont.

² Mirkhond, *Hist. des Sassanides*, French translation by Sylvestre de Sacy, p. 288.

³ Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 27.

⁴ The *initium belli Scythici* dates from the reigns of Maximin and Balbinus, in 238 (*Capit.*, 16). In the first invasion the Goths destroyed Istria, upon the Euxine.

⁵ *Delevit, fugavit, expulit atque submovit* (*Capit.*, *Gord.* 26). On the tomb of Gordian are engraved the words, *Victor Gothorum* (*Ibid.* 34).

ered Syria from this king and his dominion. We have restored Carrhae and the other cities to the Empire. We are now at Nisibis, and, the gods favoring, shall soon be at Ctesiphon, if they preserve to us Timesitheus, our prefect and father, who plans and conducts everything. To him we owe this success, and shall owe others yet. Therefore vote supplications to the gods, and thanks

SAPOR I.¹PERSIAN HORSEMAN.²

to Timesitheus.” The Senate decreed to the Emperor a quadriga of elephants, and to the prefect a triumphal chariot drawn by four horses, with this inscription: “To the tutor of the state.”³

Unfortunately, not long after, the wise tutor died, — carried off by disease, or, as was believed at the time, poisoned by Philip (243). This Philip was an Arab of Trachonitis,⁴ son of a robber chief famous in that country, and for a time following his father’s mode of life. Enrolled in the Roman army, he rose from one grade

¹ Engraved stone (sardonyx) of three layers, 23 millim. by 20. Pehlvi legend, of which four letters only can be clearly made out. Cf. Mordtmann, *Zeitschrift der deutsch. Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. xviii. pl. vi. 4. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,344.)

² Intaglio of the Sassanid style. Perforated cone, 10 millim. in diameter. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,377.)

³ Capit., *Gord.* 27. An inscription recently discovered in Algeria gives Gordian seven imperatorial salutations (*Bull. de corr  sp. afric.* 1882, p. 119).

⁴ His name was M. Julius Philippus, and that of his wife Marcia Otacilia Severa. (See L. Renier, *Inscr. d’Alg.* No. 2,540.) According to Aurelius Victor (*Cacs.* 28), he was born at Bostra, and gave that city its later name, Philippopolis. Ecclesiastical councils, however, mention both Bostra and Philippopolis. — the latter a town in the neighborhood of the former (Labbe, *Conc.* viii. 644, 675). M. Waddington has discovered the ruins of Philippopolis, where are yet to be seen a theatre, an aqueduct, baths, temples, and numerous public edifices. But the wall was never completed; Philip had not time to finish his work.

to another, until after the death of Timesitheus he was made its highest officer. Gordian appointed him to succeed in office the man whom he had perhaps murdered, and the operations against the Persians were continued. A great battle gained near Resaina, on the Chabaras, opened the road to the Persian capital; but suddenly a mutiny broke out in the Roman army.

The new prefect had fomented it by intentionally disorganizing the service which his predecessor had so well established. Secret orders led the supply-trains astray and hindered the boats laden with provisions from reaching the camps. When Philip saw discontent springing up and growing, he employed emissaries to go about among the tents and the groups of soldiers and complain of Gordian: an Emperor so young was incapable of ruling the state and commanding the army; a colleague ought to be given him who would take the place of Timesitheus. The army, impelled by



PHILIP THE ELDER.¹

famine, placed the Empire in the power of Philip, and directed that he, as tutor, should rule jointly with Gordian.²

The friends of the young Emperor could not deceive themselves in regard to this division of authority imposed by the soldiers,—it was a master who was set over him; and the insolent behavior of

¹ Bust in the Louvre, not designated with certainty (Luni marble).

² Zosimus, i. 18.

Philip made the situation perfectly evident. They prepared a counter-revolution; and when they believed themselves sufficiently strong, called together the army, as if it were a deliberative assembly. Gordian, ascending his tribunal, complained before them of the ingratitude of Philip, whom he had, he said, loaded with favors, and appealed to the soldiers for justice; that is to say, the deposition of the Emperor whom they had appointed. But the opposing party were victorious, and it was Gordian who was deposed. Here Capitolinus places a scene of unworthy supplications, in which Gordian ignobly descends all the steps of power, begging



SILVER COIN OF
PHILIP THE
ELDER.¹

first a share in the Empire, then the rank of Caesar, or the title of praetorian prefect, lastly, the grade of *dux* and his life. We have no more reason to believe in this young man's cowardice than in his great courage; but at twenty a man does not die thus. Gordian was killed near Zaitha, the city of olive-trees, where his assassin erected to his memory a

splendid tomb, which a century later was yet standing.² Three other Emperors, Valerian, Carus, and Julian, were destined to die in these deserts.

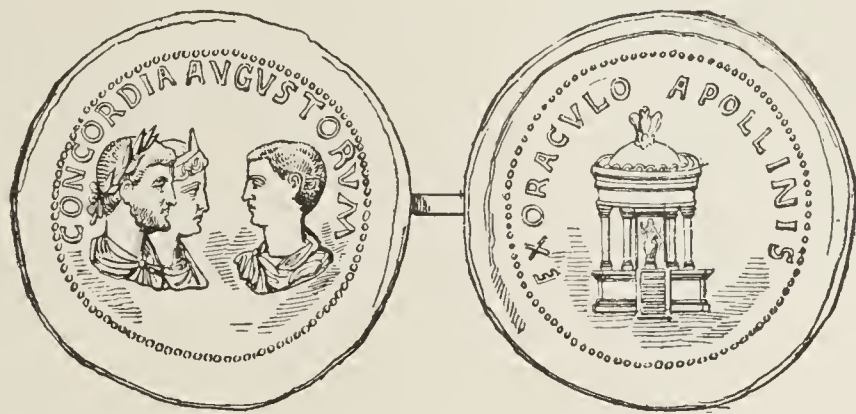
Philip wrote to the Senate that the soldiers had chosen him Emperor in the stead of Gordian, deceased by natural causes; and the Senate decreed to the latter apotheosis, and to the former the imperial titles. The Conscript Fathers consoled themselves for their secret grief by granting to all the surviving members of the ill-fated family, once so prosperous, exemption from guardianship, legations, and municipal burdens (*munera*). This was all that they now had it in their power to give (February or March, 244).

¹ PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS: reverse of a silver coin of Philip the Elder; medal commemorative of peace with the Persians.

² Amm. Marcellin., xxiii. 5. The government of Gordian III. was remarkable for great legislative activity; the *Code* of Justinian mentions two hundred and forty ordinances of this reign. One of them is important; it granted to soldiers who had accepted, unawares, a burdensome inheritance, the advantage of being held to the payment of the debts only to the extent of the assets (*Code*, vi. 22). Hence the institution of the inventory.

III. — PHILIP (244).

INSTEAD of prosecuting the war against the Persians, discouraged as they were by their defeat at Resaina, Philip made haste to conclude peace, on terms advantageous to them,¹ and returned to Antioch. Eusebius, who is disposed to represent this murderer as a Christian, says that it was related in his time² that Philip, with the Empress, wishing to celebrate Easter in Antioch, the bishop, Saint Babylas, forbade them admission to the Church; upon which both humiliated themselves, made public confession of their sins, and took their places among the penitents. This popular belief in the end became historic certainty;³ although it is not easy to see what interest the Church had in claiming such a proselyte. It may be that this Arab had in his youth a knowledge of the

PHILIP, THE EMPRESS OTACILIA, AND THE YOUNGER PHILIP.⁴

Christian religion; that, like Mamaea, he had established relations with Origen;⁵ and it is certain that during his reign, as during that of Alexander, the Christians enjoyed undisturbed

¹ Eutropius, ix. 2; Zonaras, xii. 18, 19.

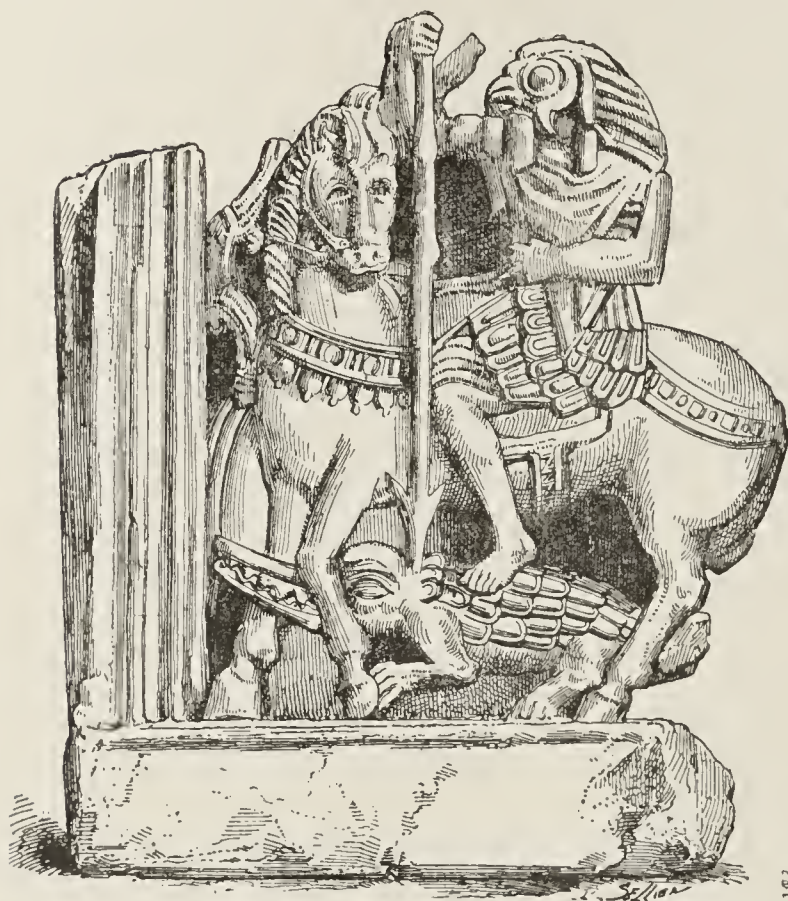
² Ὁ λόγος κατέχει (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 34).

³ SS. Chrysostom, Orosius, and Zonaras admitted them, and Saint Jerome says of Philip (*De Vir. ill.*), *qui primus de regibus rom. christ. fuit*. But these authors all lived or wrote after the penitence of Theodosius; and it was well to increase the authority of that famous example by confirming the rumors that had naturally grown up among the believers in respect to the public penitence of a whole imperial family whose toleration had caused them to be suspected of sharing in the Christian faith. At the end of the fourth century, a bishop, when that bishop was Saint Ambrose, might forbid an emperor entrance to his church; a century and half earlier no man would have dared to do it.

⁴ CONCORDIA AVGVSTORVM. Busts of Philip and Otacilia, and of their son. On the reverse: EX ORACVLO APOLLINIS; a round temple with four columns, and within it a statue of Apollo. (Bronze medallion.)

⁵ Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* vi. 33) possessed two letters written by Origen, — the one to Philip, the other to the Empress. But he does not say that he finds there the proof that these imperial persons were Christians.

tranquillity:¹ but all his public conduct was that of a pagan emperor. According to the legend of one of his coins, he believed that his accession had been predicted by Apollo;² and the medals of Otacilia Severa bear profane devices, — sacrilegious honors that a Christian believer would have refused. On the other hand, at that time of religious confusion many persons were uncertain what they believed. The rational syncretism of the Alexandrian philosophers became an unreasoning syncretism in many minds. Thus a singular monument (though of much later

DENARIUS.³

SAINT GEORGE WITH THE HEAD OF A SPARROW-HAWK. (IDENTIFIED WITH HORUS.)



ROMAN WITH THE HEAD OF A SPARROW-HAWK.

date) represents a Saint George with the head of a sparrow-hawk, — that is to say, a hero of Christian legend is confused with the Egyp-

¹ Except at Alexandria, if we may believe Eusebius (vi. 41). But this so-called persecution was probably only one of the riots so common in that city, in which Christians as well as pagans perished.

² *Ex oraculo Apollinis* (Cohen, vol. iv. p. 201, No. 4; see p. 173). He caused Gordian III. to be proclaimed *divus*, and performed all the pagan rites of the Secular Games. There occurred during his reign an outbreak at Alexandria against the Christians, "which ceased only when civil war turned away men's minds" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 41).

³ IVNO CONSERVATRIX. Juno veiled, holding a patera and a sceptre. Reverse of a coin of Otacilia.

tian god Horus.¹ The so-called Christianity of Mamaea and Otacilia was of the same nature, and even more vague than this.

The events of Philip's reign are almost unknown to us. The *Augustan History*, from Gordian III. to Valerian, — that is to say, from 244 to 253, — is lost; and to fill this gap we have only the meagre or untrustworthy summaries of Zosimus and Zonaras, who wrote, the former in the fifth century, the latter in the twelfth. They speak of a ceremony which stirred all Italy, — the celebration of the Secular Games on the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Rome (248).² To do honor to this great occasion, all the magnificence of imperial festivals was displayed, and the enthusiasm of the nations responded to the pomp of the ceremonial. The god Terminus having steadily advanced for a thousand years, the multitude might well believe that he was not now about to recede.



COIN OF PHILIP.⁴

And in considering this constant good fortune through so large a space in the duration of humanity, the degenerate sons of ancient Rome allowed their poets to predict for the Empire a new millennium. But shouts of victory were



AUREUS.³

about to cease; a successor of Augustus and Trajan was soon to perish in battle with the Goths; another was to be a captive in the hands of Sapor; and already he was born who was to reduce the ancient queen of the world to the condition of a mere Italian town.

Although his son (M. Julius Philippus) was but seven years of age, Philip made him Caesar and (in 247) Augustus, — forgetting the fate of those imperial boys for whom the purple had been but a shroud. The new Emperor also placed all his kindred in positions of importance. His brother Priscus commanded the army of Syria; his father-in-law (?), Severianus, that of Moesia. Philip treated the senators with respect, and seems to have ruled moderately, without cruelties or confiscations. However, he confiscated

¹ Cf. *Horus et S. Georges*, memoir by M. Clermont-Ganneau in the *Revue archéol.* 1877.

² The thousandth year of Rome began, accepting Varro's calculation, the 21st of April, 247. The year was allowed to be completed before the games were celebrated (Eckhel, vii. 324).

³ *Aureus* of the younger Philip, Caesar and Prince of the Youth (Cohen, No. 28).

⁴ Coin commemorating the thousandth anniversary of Rome. (Reverse of a large bronze of Philip.)

to the state the palace of Pompey, which was the property of the Gordians, and had been much embellished by them. The Carpae, a people of Getic origin, probably resident on the banks of the



THE YOUNGER PHILIP.¹

Pruth, had come down into the lands of the lower Danube. It appears probable that Philip went in person to expel them, and made two campaigns in that war (245–246).² Upon his return to Rome the news arrived that the Syrians, exasperated by the severities

¹ Bust found at Civita Lavinia. (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 69.)

² *Victoria Carpica*, *Carpicus Maximus*, legends on two of his coins; another, giving him the title *Germanicus Maximus*, announces some victory over the Germans (Cohen, vol. iv. p. 202, No. 5).

RUINS OF THE THERMAE OF THE GORDIANS.¹

of Priscus, had proclaimed an emperor, Iotapianus, who called himself a descendant of Alexander, and that certain rebels in Moesia had proclaimed another, Marinus.² Philip, in much anxiety,

¹ Photograph by Parker.

² We have imperial coins of two other usurpers who cannot be placed, — Pacatianus and Sponsianus. The workmanship of the coins indicates the time of Philip or Decius (Cohen, vol. iv. pp. 229, 231, and pl. xi.).

consulted the Senate. Decius, one of the members of that assembly, who understood the value of the new Augusti, announced that these mock emperors would not be able to maintain their authority; and in fact they fell of themselves. Philip, however, believed it needful to send to the army of the Danube the wise adviser who had so well foreseen the turn affairs would take. Decius long resisted, apprehending that these legions, who had now for fourteen years remained obedient, would seize the first pretext to give themselves the pleasure and profit of a revolt. His anxiety



COIN OF THE ELDER
PHILIP.¹

was not unfounded; he had scarcely entered the camp when the soldiers saluted him emperor, in spite of himself. The very men whom he had been commissioned to punish, had devised this scheme, which at once saved them from chastisement and secured to them a *donativum*.

Decius wrote to his master that as soon as he returned to Rome he would lay aside the purple. The Emperor did not credit this promise, and marched against the army of Pannonia; an engagement took place near Verona,² and he was defeated and killed. The praetorians left at Rome murdered his son (249), a boy now twelve years of age, who, it is said, had never been seen to smile.³

¹ Coin of the elder Philip, with the legend: VICTORIA CARPICA.

² The *Chronicle of Alexandria* represents him as forty-five years of age at the time of his death. For results of the Gothic invasion, see chap. xvi.

³ Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 28. This tragedy took place early in the autumn.

⁴ Reverse of a bronze medal of the two Philips and Otacilia, with the legend: GERM[anici] MAX[imi] CARPICI MAX[imi]. Victory, standing in a quadriga, assists Philip, Otacilia, and their son to enter it (Cohen, No. 5).



BRONZE MEDAL OF THE TWO PHILIPS AND OTACILIA.⁴

CHAPTER XCV.

THE EMPIRE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

I. — THE BARBARIANS.

THE Roman Empire, extended around the Mediterranean Sea. included the most favored regions of the temperate zone, — fertile lands with their abundant harvests, and beautiful cities, the earliest home of civilization. Notwithstanding the catastrophes which occurred periodically at Rome or in the camps, this region was a vast oasis amid the triple barbarism of the North, the South, and the East. Hitherto that of the South had not been formidable. The desert horsemen had not yet dreamed of abandoning the date-trees which fed them, and the wells of which they had drunk since Abraham's time, to scour the world for the sake of disseminating a new religion. Only the Blemyes, from time to time, disturbed Upper Egypt, and on the Arabian coast the Saracens began to attract notice, — witness the foolish story, related by the *Chronicle of Alexandria*, of lions and serpents placed along their frontier by Decius to deter them from crossing it.¹

The East swarmed with its countless myriads of men, formidable in frontier wars, but organized into great states, and by that very circumstance rendered incapable of those vast migrations which tread cities and empires under foot.

In the North, on the contrary, the great movement from East to West still continued which had begun in the remotest ages with the first migration of the Aryans. Not being able to encroach upon the settled inhabitants of Iran, the nomad hordes bore northward, passed through the *Völkerthor*, "the gate of the nations,"²

¹ Amm. Marcellinus says (xxii. 15): . . . *Scenitas Arabas quos Saracenos nunc adpellamus*.

² This is the name German authors give to the plain which extends from the last slopes of the Ural to the Caspian Sea.

and crowded the great Sarmatian and Germanic plains in a vagrant mass, but slightly attached to the soil, a pastoral rather than an agricultural people, and accused by an old author of holding the doctrine that might makes right,¹ — a view which they have always held, and still hold at the present day. They were most dangerous neighbors. Notwithstanding the ungrateful soil and severe climate, these prolific races increased rapidly,² and in the midst of their poverty forever turned their eyes towards the lands of sunshine and of wealth. Thrice already, within historic times, had they attempted to enter them.

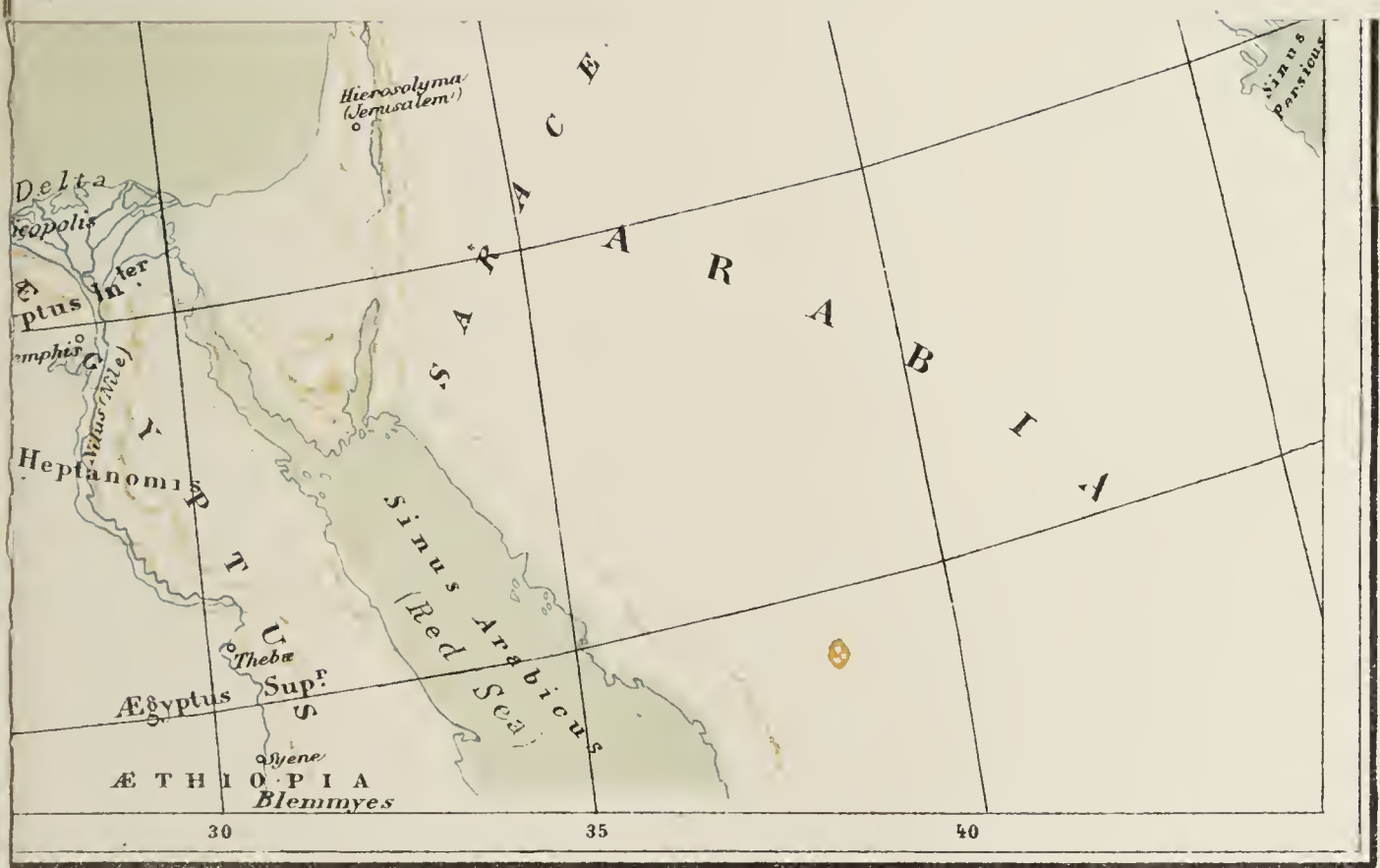
In the time of Marius, while three hundred thousand Cimbri and Teutones ravaged Gaul, Spain, and Northern Italy, others had fallen upon the Hellenic peninsula, devastating it from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. When, after the victory of Vercellae, Marius had set upon his buckler the head of a Barbarian with protruding tongue, it was to signify that Rome had strangled the Barbaric world in the grasp of her mighty hands.

But forty years had scarcely passed when this formidable enemy reappeared with threatening aspect; a hundred and twenty thousand warriors, the vanguard of the great nation of the Suevi, and four hundred and thirty thousand Usipetes or Tencteri undertook the conquest of Gaul. They were already in possession of its eastern portions, when Caesar drove the former back into the German forests, and exterminated the latter between the Rhine and the Meuse. During the reign of Marcus Aurelius an immense coalition again caused anxiety even in Rome itself; the Marcomanni came as far as Aquileia, and the Emperor was obliged to remain for several years on the banks of the Danube with the principal forces of the Empire.

Thus, in three centuries, there had been three formidable attacks, by the Cimbri, by Ariovistus, and by the Marcomanni, and in the interval between the great invasions, a multitude of combats and endless alarms along the Rhine and the Danube. This northern Barbaric world was like a human sea, whose waves, now violent, now feeble, were forever beating against the Roman intrenchments.

¹ *Jus in viribus habet* (Pomp. Mela).

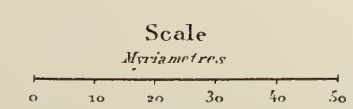
² *Scanzia insula officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationum* (Jordanes, 4).



Grave par Erhard



THE ROMAN EMPIRE
AND
THE BARBARIC WORLD
in the second half of the Third Century.



With Caesar, Augustus, and Trajan, Rome had taken the offensive; she had crossed the Rhine and the Danube, and on the one hand penetrated as far as the Elbe, where she could not maintain herself, and on the other as far as the summit of the Carpathians, across conquered Dacia. But the Germans could not be grasped; neither in peace nor in war had Rome any hold upon them. From two hundred years of contact with civilization they had gained nothing. Ammianus Marcellinus still shows them, in the time of Julian, possessing no cities in their own country, and afraid to dwell in those which they had conquered. "A walled inclosure seemed to them a net in which men were caught, and the city itself a tomb to bury them alive."¹ The name of one of their great tribes, the Suevi, or Suabians, signifies "those going to and fro."² From deserters, from prisoners of war, from Roman traders who bought in their country the amber of the Baltic or the long fair hair of their women, they asked only the means of making their attacks more formidable. Nowhere, therefore, in all this vague and fugitive world did Rome find solid ground whereon she could establish herself, and thence command the entire country. Accordingly, after some vain attempts, she declined to venture into it again. Her policy in regard to the Germans was to cover with fortresses the Roman banks of the two great rivers, and to throw across this line of defence —

YOUNG DACIAN.³

¹ xvi. 2.

² *Die Schwebende* (Jules Sylvain Zeller, *Hist. d'Allemagne*, i. 81). Tacitus represents the Germans as saying to the Ubii: *Postulamus a vobis, muros coloniae, munimenta servitiū detrahatis* (*Hist.* iv. 64).

³ England, *Marm. Oxon*, pl. 20, and Clàrac, *op. cit.* pl. 834 B, No. 2, 161 J.

which extended uninterruptedly from the North Sea to the Euxine — pensions to the chiefs to win these warriors to peace, many intrigues in order to divide them, and a little gold to attract their bravest soldiers into the service of the Empire.

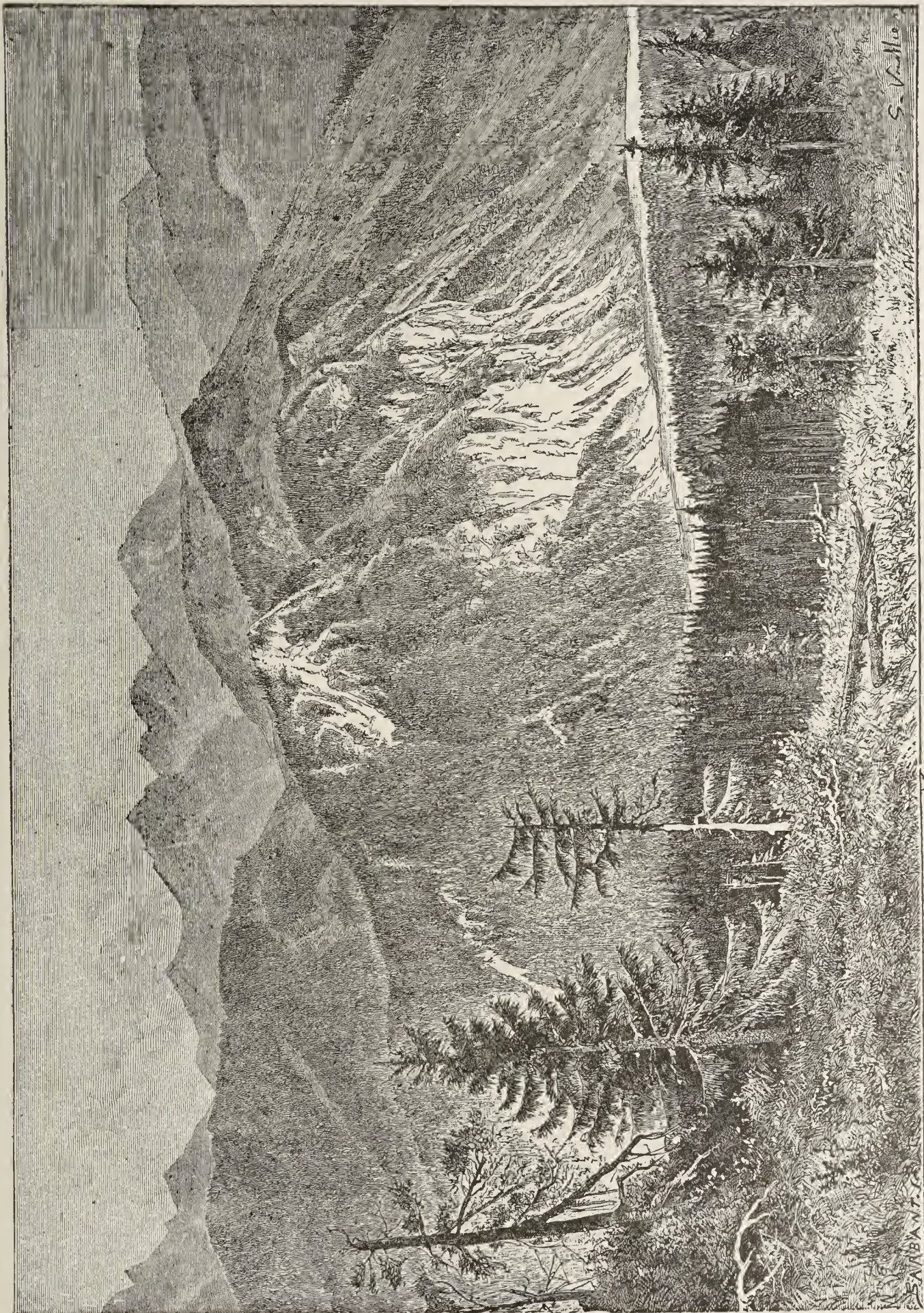
These precautions sufficed until the time when the migration of the Goths threw Eastern Germany into confusion, and brought to the banks of the Euxine those who were to play the chief part in the destruction of the old world.

The great Gothic nation, a people who have left in the Scandinavian peninsula their name and the traces of their abode, had quitted it at an unknown but recent period, under the leadership of two powerful families, — the Amalidae (Amalungs) and Baltidae (Baltungs), who were regarded as the descendants of Odin and Freya, the Venus of Northern mythology.¹ These priest-kings — who, however, had no sacerdotal character, judges of the people in time of peace, and military leaders in war — subjugated the Vandals, who were probably of the same race with themselves,² and a crowd of other tribes whom they incorporated into their own mass, or drove back either to the South or West. The number of the Goths increasing³ with their victories, which drew to them adventurers eager for war and booty, the great mass of the nation was broken up into two bodies: one, the Goths of the East, or Ostrogoths, under Filimer, crossed the Vistula and subjugated the Sarmatians as far as the Euxine; the other, the Goths of the West, or Visigoths, settled around the mouths of the Danube. Certain tribes, set in motion by this great migration, went still farther westward, — the Gepidae into Transylvania, where the Romans now held only the fortified posts; the Vandals and Heruli into the Moravian Carpathians; the Langobardi into the upper valley of the Oder; the Burgundians into those of the Saale and the Mein. It is possible even that some of these tribes reached the southern frontier early enough to have shared in the war with the Marcomanni in the time of Marcus Aurelius, or that their pressure upon the Germans

¹ "The Baltidae," says Jordanes (29), "are, after the Amalidae, the noblest of the Goths." The Vandals had kings of the family of the Astingae (*id.* 22). Ptolemy, in the time of the Antonines, mentions the Goths as already established on the lower Vistula. The place vacated on the shores of the Baltic was occupied by the Slavs.

² Pliny, *Hist. nat.* iv. 14; Procop., *Bell. Vand.* i. 1.

³ . . . *Magna populi numerositate crescente* (Jordanes, 4).



VIEW AMONG THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS.

Library
of the
University of Illinois

of the South obliged the latter to seek their fortunes across the Danube.

By the success of this migration the Goths found themselves brought into the neighborhood of the civilized world. The rich pasture-lands of the Black Sea fed their flocks; the fertile Ukraine gave them more corn than they needed; the Sarmatian rivers carried their vessels down to the Euxine, girt by a belt of cities full of wealth easily to be captured; and while the Carpathians, which the legions had never yet ventured to cross, concealed the movements of these Barbarians, they had, in the open space between the extremity of these mountains and the sea, a gateway always giving them access into the Roman provinces. They remained, therefore, for the present tranquil and fearless, multiplying in these fruitful regions, whence their warriors could almost see the enormous booty in store for their courage.

Their national songs, which Jordanes had the opportunity of reading, but unfortunately did not preserve for us, related their exploits. They boasted of having subjected the Marcomanni to tribute, and the chiefs of the Quadi to obedience. Their rule, therefore, or their influence, extended from Bohemia to the Tauric Chersonesus, and their name was dreaded far and near. Their first appearance in Roman history is in the year 215. To attach to themselves the powerful nation whose hand was so heavy upon their ancient enemies,¹ the Romans subsidized the Goths,—which did not prevent the Roman provinces from soon having cause to dread these dangerous neighbors. While the body of the nation remained stationary, some adventurous band was always detaching itself, and at its own risk and peril crossing the Danube or the Euxine. Did the Goths essay, like the Germans in Trajan's time, to enter into relations with the great Oriental Empire? This we do not know; but it is matter of history that when Sapor invaded Roman Asia the Goths simultaneously fell upon Moesia. As early as 238, in the time of Pupienus and Balbinus, they destroyed an important city in this province, and in 242 Gordian encountered them here, where it is probable they had remained since their earlier inroad. He killed a large number of them, and

¹ Jordanes, 16: . . . *Sub cujus saepe dextra Wandalus jacuit, stetit sub pretio Marcomannus.*

by the aid of money¹ was able to rid himself of the rest. It was but for a short time, however; they had learned the road, and later would return in force sufficient to destroy a Roman army and kill an Emperor. In a space of thirty years (238–269) ten important invasions were made by them; and they rested for a century (269–375) only after they had driven the Roman garrison out of Dacia Trajana.

While in the northeast masses of men accustomed to fight under great military chiefs pressed heavily upon the frontier, about the upper Danube, the Rhine, and the lower Mein the Barbarians were organizing in a manner which gave their warlike enterprises that unity of action which they had hitherto always lacked.

During the first and second centuries of the Christian era history knows only the Germany of Tacitus; in the third that Germany seems suddenly to have disappeared, and another is seen. Under the double pressure of Rome and the Gothic invasion, the Germans had felt the need of a kind of union among their tribes, without, however, going so far as to establish actual confederations; and seeing the Roman frontiers so poorly defended, their warriors formed the habit of making inroads into these provinces which had been so long closed against them.

At the epoch of which we now speak, nothing remained of the social and religious organization which Tacitus describes, nor of the tribes known to him. We now hear of the Alemanni, the Franks, and the Saxons; later, of the Thuringians and Bavarians,—designations at once ethnographic and geographic.²

“The Alemanni,” says Agathias, “are a mixture of different peoples, which is signified by their name, ‘the men of all races.’” But the Suevi were the dominant people, and gave their name to the Decumatian lands, henceforward called Suabia. The Franks were also “the men armed with the *framea*,” or, more probably, “the free men;”³ that is to say, men of the Catti, Sicambri, Bructeri, Chamavi, Tencteri, and Ansivarii, who, without the

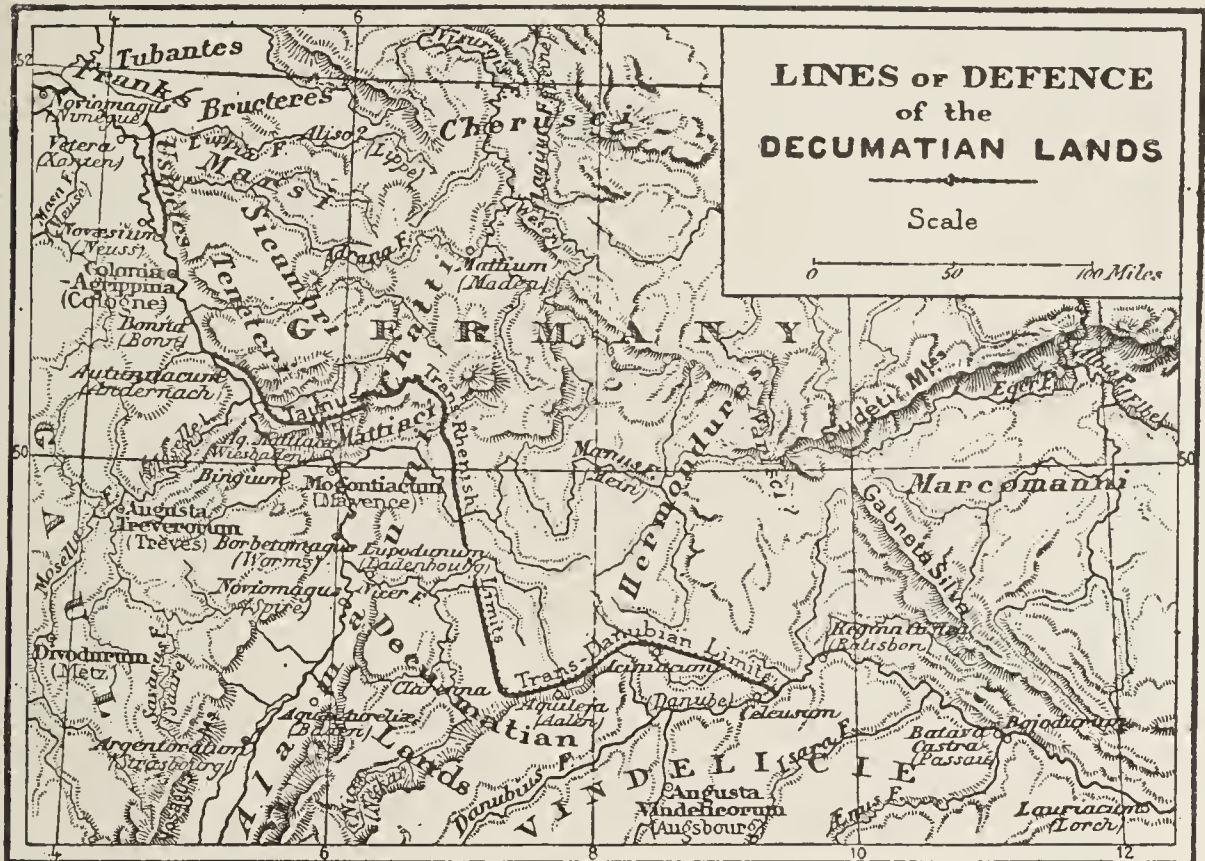
¹ See in the *Excerpta de Legationibus* of P. Patricius, Bonn edit., i. 24, the account of the deputation of the Carpae at Menophylis.

² In respect to this new grouping of the populations of western Germany, see Wietersheim, *Geschichte der Völkerwanderung*, i. 160–229, edit. of 1881.

³ Wachter (*Glossarium Germanicum*) derives the name from *Warg*, *Wrang*, exiled, banished,—which does not correspond with the idea of an agglomeration of tribes.

general participation of their respective tribes, engaged in war under individual leaders. The Saxons, "the men of the long knife," *seax*, recruited their bands among the Chauci, the Frisii, the Angrivarii, and what remained of the Cherusci.

These peoples had no permanent directing council or sole chief, although all or most of the tribes belonging to one group sometimes united to wage a national war. More frequently, how-



LINES OF DEFENCE OF THE AGRI DECUMATES.

ever, there were formed among them free associations of warrior bands who acted together for a definite purpose, and this purpose having been accomplished or else defeated, separated, until another association would be formed, after a time, for some new enterprise.¹ These disorderly bands were the more to be feared because Rome could have with them neither real peace nor open war.

As the aborigines of America had their hunting-grounds, so

¹ G. Waitz (*Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte*, i. 342) says: *Ueberhaupt weiss die altere Zeit nichts von eigentlichen Bundesverfassungen*. This is true; but Sozomenes (iii. 6) shows the Saxons acting, in a given case, as a nation, and Julian was obliged to encounter at Strasburg seven confederated Aleman kings (Amm. Marcellinus, xvi. 12). But seven other chiefs of the same nation held aloof.

each of these nations had its territory to pillage: the Alemanni claimed the region extending from the Mein to the Alps, and from the Bohemian Forest to the Vosges, that is to say, the Roman provinces of Upper Germany and Rhaetia; the Franks, the provinces of Lower Germany and Belgica; the Saxons, the ocean and the British Islands.

Under Caracalla the Alemanni had invaded the Decumatian Lands; there they experienced a defeat which drove them back and kept them quiet for twenty years. Milestones have been found in this region bearing the names of Elagabalus and Alexander,—a proof that these Emperors were obeyed there.¹

In the reign of Alexander the Franks had with impunity scoured the whole of Gaul, killing and pillaging, until, satiated with booty, they returned to their encampments, indifferent to the fate of their companions whom they had left along the road. Maximin pursued these plunderers into the depths of their forests, and believed that

COIN OF MAXIMIN.²GOLD COIN.³

he had struck the barbaric world a terrible blow; upon his coins we read the legend, *Victoria Germanica*, so often imprinted on Roman money, but never true except for the moment, since the blow was always struck into empty space.

In the middle of the third century, then, Germany organized itself for the attack: in the East, an innumerable nation, ruled by a family who were regarded as favorites of the gods, and who knew how to prepare enterprises carefully and to conduct them with unanimity; in the West, confederations formed for purposes of war, and a multitude of chiefs who are incessantly flinging their predatory bands at the Empire, as *bandilleros* fling blazing

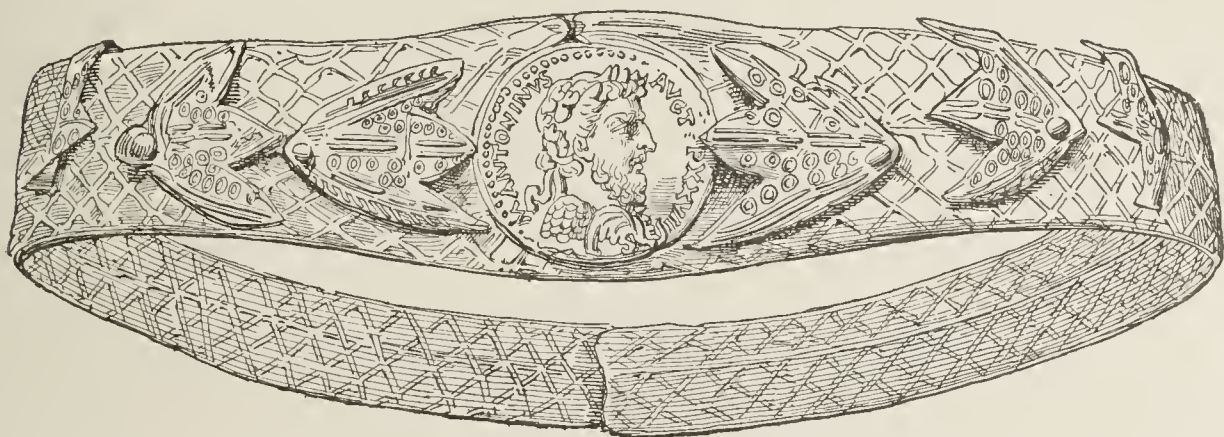
¹ From the fact that these milestones were discovered near Baden-Baden, while others, bearing the name of Septimius Severus, were found much farther to the East, Wintersheim (ii. 214) concludes that the Roman frontier had already been pushed back in the West under Elagabalus or Alexander.

² Coin of Maximin, with the legend: *VICTORIA GERMANICA*. Maximin standing, crowned by a Victory. (Medium bronze.)

³ *VICTORIA GERMANICA*. Gold coin of Maximin. *MAXIMINVS PIVS AVG. GERM.* Laurelled bust of the Emperor. On the reverse, a standing Victory; at her feet a German, his hands tied behind his back.

darts at the bull in the arena. Assailed by contemptible enemies whom he cannot reach, the powerful creature is confused, distracted; he bellows, and falls to the ground. Such was to be the fall of the Roman colossus; but in this case the *fiesta del toro* was destined to last two centuries.

The danger is increasing, then, along the northern frontier. All the outposts of the Empire which covered the main position are lost, or will shortly be so. The Decumatian Lands are invaded; Dacia has now but a few scattered garrisons, which will soon be recalled by Aurelian; a city which up to this time had been as the eye and hand of the Emperors over the Scythian world, Olbia,² — which the Antonines had protected, and where statues were erected in honor of Caracalla,³ — disappears

SCYTHIAN COIN.¹

HEAD-BAND OF GOLD, WITH A MEDALLION OF COMMODUS, FOUND IN A TOMB IN THE CRIMEA.

at this time from history; and the other allies of Hadrian at the mouths of the great Sarmatian rivers⁴ are at the mercy of the Goths. Soon Rome will fall back behind the Danube; and even the great river will no longer protect her, for already Istriopolis, an important city of the Dobroudja, has been destroyed, and the Alani have penetrated into the valley of the Ebro. While the Barbaric world is making this step forward, Roman commerce has fallen back; her traders no longer dare venture into the lands of the

¹ Scythian coin struck at Olbia (*Dictionn. numism.* vol. i. p. 667, No. 1,268).

² Capit., *Ant.* 9.

³ Boeckh, *C. I. G.* No. 2,091. After the year 250 A. D. we hear no more of Olbia.

⁴ See Vol. V. pp. 331 *et seq.*

North. Imperial coins found in these regions are, with a single exception, pieces of date anterior to the third century.¹

Upon the Black Sea, the kings of the Cimmerian Bosphorus being no longer able to do police duty for Rome, piracy reappeared. In Asia the national and religious revolution effected by the Sassanidae was the cause of another danger, and these threatening events occurred at a time when the Roman power of resistance had diminished. The dark days were beginning.

II. — THE ROMAN ARMY.

It has been a common remark that the nations included within the Roman Empire were old, that life had exhausted them, that their blood was impoverished, and that, following the common law of living things, they had reached a condition of senility, — the stage preceding death. These reasons, furnished by the convenient doctrine of historic fatality, may formerly have appeared satisfactory; at the present day there must be made a more profound examination of the morbid symptoms, which errors produced, and wisdom could have prevented.

And first, the danger appeared so great on the frontiers only by reason of the interior situation.

It is no Hannibal at the gates of Rome; the enemy who are approaching are only hordes whom the ancient Roman legions could have easily driven away. In the first century of the Christian era the Marcomanni, in the second the Dacians, were as formidable as the Goths are now, and the Germans of the West had been as eager as are the Frankish and Alemannic bands to invade Gaul or Italy. They were prevented from doing so because at that time the Roman world had as leader, together with an army still worthy of itself, a great man, whose reign lasted twenty years. After him another, for an equal length of time, watched over the Empire and the frontiers. Under the mighty hand of

¹ Note by M. de Witte to the *Hist. de la monn. rom.* iii. 116. He ought, however, also to say that the base coin of copper and silver at this time issued by the imperial mints could be forcibly circulated only in the Empire. Nations outside would naturally refuse this token-money, which had no intrinsic value. (See sect. iv. of this chapter.)

Trajan and that of Hadrian the Barbaric world bent the knee. Severus still held it motionless and timid. But now there were boys where there had been men; fools were in the place of the wise; reigns of a few days' length had followed those lasting for years; a policy of chance had taken the place of a policy of foresight; civil and military institutions were all relaxed; the government governed no longer; and the state tottered upon its yielding and crumbling base.

Montesquieu represents the Roman Empire at this time as a kind of irregular republic, somewhat like the former Regency of Algiers, in which the soldiery at will appointed and deposed the Dey. The remark is just; the Roman people never employing their electoral right, and the Senate, having suffered its right to be wrested from it by the praetorians, — the armies of the frontiers had now deprived the praetorians of this lucrative opportunity. The thing appears to us shameful, and so it is; but it was inevitable that the military power, which alone survived amid the ruin of the other institutions of Augustus, should dominate all. Contemporaries were not surprised at this. During centuries the army had been the Roman people under arms, and the recollection of this fact was not yet completely effaced; even made up as it now was, the army which defended the Empire was the only body which appeared

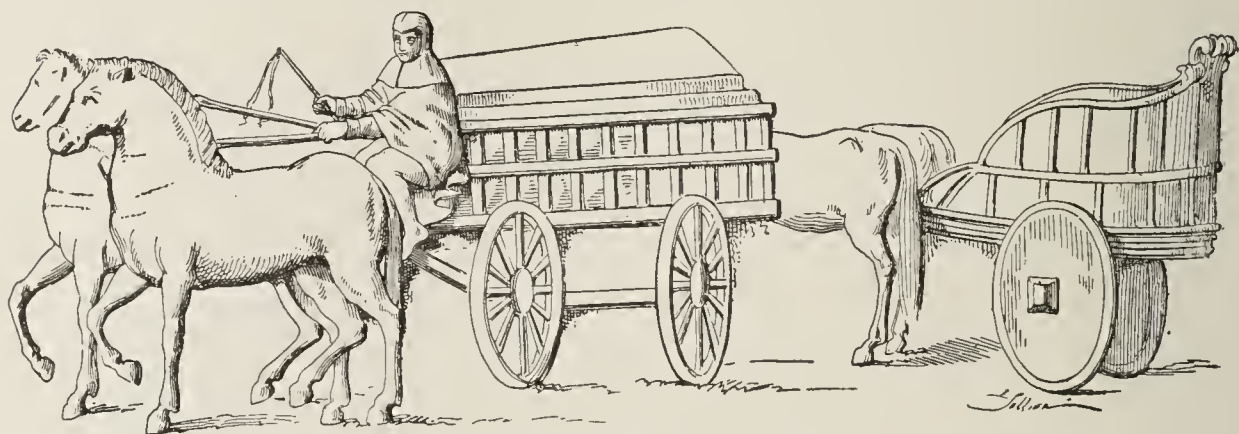


LEGIONARY FOOT-SOLDIER. STANDARD-BEARER.¹

¹ Found at Mayence, and preserved in the museum of that city. On the left shoulder Luccius bears a helmet with lowered visor; a long and a short sword hang at his belt; he holds in the left hand his buckler, and in the other the standard adorned with the civic crown. Cf. Lindenschmit, *Tracht und Bewaffnung des römischen Heeres während der Kaiserzeit*, etc., pl. iii. fig. 1, and p. 19.

worthy to act for it. Saint Jerome thought thus, for he compares the election of the bishop by the priests to the election of the Emperor by the soldiers.

Unfortunately the new army is very different from the old. It was the infantry of the legions that had conquered the world; but that infantry is now despised, and — a certain sign of weakness in military matters — the cavalry becomes every day more and more important. It almost equals the infantry in number, while in the time of Polybius, by a contrary excess, the legion had but



CARTS FOR TRANSPORTATION OF BAGGAGE (POMPEII).

one horseman to ten foot-soldiers.¹ Commanders-in-chief of cavalry are appointed, — Balista under Macrianus, Aureolus under Gallienus, Aurelian under Claudius II., Saturninus under Probus; and this title gave them great authority. The Barbarians served chiefly in the cavalry; and its increase shows how the foreign element was also increasing in the Roman army.

At the same time the camp began to be hampered by an enormous baggage-train. A letter of the Emperor Valerian shows what the commander of a legion required annually for his military household, — 715 bushels of corn, 1,430 of barley, 13 cwt. of pork, 400 gallons of old wine, 300 skins for tents, etc.,² without counting

¹ Marquardt, *Handb.* ii. 584, and *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres*, xxv. 473. According to General Rogniat, the proportion ought to be one in six; according to Napoleon, one in four. This varies according to the character of the country where the war is carried on. At the present time it is one in four in the French army (Budget of 1877).

² "We have intrusted to Claudius the tribuneship of the Fifth Martian legion." (It will be noticed that at this epoch the commanders of the legions were only tribunes.) "You will give to him out of our private treasure for his annual salary, 3,000 *modii* of corn" (the *modius* being very nearly a peck), "6,000 of barley, 2,000 pounds of pork; 3,500 *sextarii* of old wine" (the *sextarius* being about a pint and a half), "150 *sextarii* of good oil, 600 of oil of second

the pay, which was 25,000 sesterces in good gold pieces,¹ at a time when commerce had only debased coin at its command.² We see further what onerous and sometimes singular dues they received from the state, and can estimate also what crushing burdens were imposed on the treasury by all these favors, often, moreover, doubled and trebled. In giving to Probus the office of Governor of the East, the Emperor Tacitus gave him five times more than the usual salary of this office. The *impedimenta* of the officers corresponded, of course, with that of the commander; and it is easy to see how, retarded by such enormous baggage, the Roman army, notwithstanding its numerous cavalry, could scarcely ever come

quality; 200 *modii* of salt, 150 pounds of wax; a sufficient quantity of hay, straw, vinegar, fruits, and vegetables; 300 skins to make tents, six she-mules, three horses, ten camels, and nine mules annually; 50 pounds of silver ware and 150 gold philips " (*aurei*) " of our coinage annually, and at the new year 160 *trientes* " (a third of the *aureus*). " You will give him eleven pounds weight of pots and jars for wine, eleven more of kitchen utensils; two red military tunics annually, two silk-trimmed cloaks, two clasps of gilded silver, one of gold with copper point, a shoulder-belt of gilded silver, a ring with two stones weighing an ounce, a bracelet seven ounces in weight, a collar weighing a pound, a gilded helmet, two bucklers embossed with gold, a cuirass (which he will return), two Herculean lances, two short javelins, two reaping-hooks, four others for hay; a cook (whom he will return), two of the most beautiful female captives, a white garment of half silk, and another of Girba purple, an under-tunic of Mauretanian purple, a secretary (whom he will return), an architect (whom he will return), two pairs of Cyprus cushions for the table, two under-tunics without borders, two sheets, a toga (which he will return), a *laticlave* (which he will return), two footmen who will be always at his orders, a carpenter, a praetorian steward, a water-carrier, a fisherman, a pastry-cook; 1,000 pounds of wood daily, if there is enough, otherwise, as much as the locality can furnish; four shovelfuls of charcoal daily, a bath-man, and the wood necessary for hot baths, failing which, he will be obliged to employ the public *thermae*. You will furnish at your discretion other things of minor importance; but you will not fix their value, so that if any article be lacking, he could not require its equivalent in money " (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 14). See also what Valerian ordered the urban prefect to furnish daily to Aurelian during his stay in Rome, without counting what was supplied him by the prefects of the treasury (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 9). The French regulations furnish a general of division for campaign rations: 2,465 kilos of pork, 175 of rice, 48.75 of salt, 61.25 of sugar, 46.75 of coffee, 730 litres of wine. This allowance is for a year, and is furnished $\frac{1}{360}$ daily during the campaign, and in time of peace is suspended. But the Romans made no distinction between the peace and war footing, so that the enormous allowances enumerated above were permanent, while the French treasury supports this expense only in time of war. Under Louis XV. the French army had enormous baggage. The ordinance of March 9, 1756, gave each lieutenant-general thirty horses, and each colonel fourteen; and they actually had twice that number, with an immense train of carriages and wagons. Consequently these armies could not move. (See the *Comte de Gisors*, by Camille Rousset, pp. 182 *et seq.*)

¹ . . . *Cujus militiae salarium, in auro suscipe.*

² *Hist. de la monn. rom.* vol. iii. p. 143, No. 1. Probus received for his pay as tribune only 100 aurei, and the remainder in denarii and sesterces; but the total amounted to 28,000 sesterces, instead of 25,000, the 3,000 sesterces additional representing the difference in exchange, or what the tribune lost in receiving part of his pay in denarii and sesterces, instead of receiving the whole in gold.

up with an active enemy, who appeared suddenly, and disappeared as rapidly as he came.

In this army there were also a crowd of useless persons who on days of battle were not present in the ranks. It was regarded as an important reform when Alexander Severus reduced the number



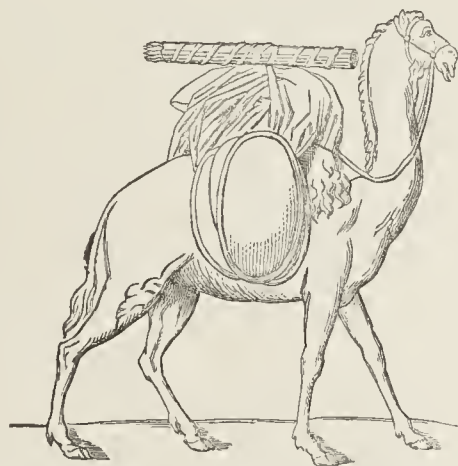
ROMAN HORSEMAN.¹

of orderlies to ten for a legate, six for a dux, and four for a tribune, — a proof that this number had been hitherto greatly exceeded; and it doubtless again was so in later reigns, these restrictive ordinances being unpopular.

Two things still further prevented a general from requiring of his troops those rapid marches which had so many times enabled the Roman army to surprise an enemy and strike decisive blows. The soldiers had been accustomed to carry with them provisions

¹ Roman horseman, found at Bonn and preserved in the museum of that city (Lindenschmit, *op. cit.* pl. vii. No. 1).

for seventeen days, unless they were in an enemy's country. Alexander relieved his legionaries of this burden, and established their camps in such a way that they could receive their provisions without fatigue. On a march, mules and camels carried the supplies; but this required another train to supply the beasts of burden and their drivers: thus the line of *impedimenta* lengthened, and the army became very unwieldy. Moreover the order of battle was changed, and the soldiers' arms were modified. As from day to day the number of Barbarians in the army increased, it had become necessary to abandon the earlier organization of the legion, which required a mathematical precision in manœuvres and much skill in camp labors. The quality of the soldier deteriorating, less was asked from individual experience, more from collective power. Caracalla had organized a Macedonian phalanx, and Alexander Severus increased it to thirty thousand men, — a dense mass, difficult to break into, but difficult also to move, and in which much strength was wasted. Lastly, these soldiers, so busy with making themselves comfortable, and to whom so much was necessary, found the weapons of the republican legionaries far too heavy; they required a smaller buckler, less fatiguing to their enfeebled arms, and the iron cuirass and helmet became an insupportable burden, from which they begged the Emperor Gratian to relieve them.²

DROMEDARY CARRYING BAGGAGE.¹

It had been now many years since the semestrial tribunes had actively fulfilled the law requiring of them a period of service in the legions, and the senators were extremely disinclined to camp life. We read that one of them obtained from Commodus exemption in the matter of military service;³ Caracalla excused them all from it; Gallienus forbade it to them;⁴ and an old author is surprised at finding a young man of good family in the service.⁵

¹ Bas-relief from the Column of the Emperor Theodosius at Constantinople.

² Vegetius, i. 20. The phalanx did not last.

³ Borghesi, *Œuvres compl.* v. 311; L. Renier, *Mél. d'épigr.* p. 18. Alexander Severus had thought of making a similar rule (Lamprid., *Alex.* 45).

⁴ Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 33: . . . *Ne imperium ad optimos nobilium transferetur, senatum militia vetuit, etiam adire exercitum.*

⁵ *Id.*, Valer. 32: . . . *Quamquam genere satis claro.*

The decurions of the provincial cities demanded the same privilege as the Roman senators, and the law, sanctioning this inside desertion, closed the army against them forever.¹ It was the whole

aristocracy, great and small, which, in an empire founded by arms, and incapable of maintaining itself without their aid, now refused to bear them.

The effects of this change began to appear about the middle of the third century. The sons of Roman and provincial senators, who had hitherto filled the great military and civil offices, were replaced in the army by men of low degree. Some of these soldiers of fortune became able generals; but for the most part they were men of ignoble ambition, who, destitute of the patriotic pride of the early consuls, presently tore the Empire into thirty pieces, that they might each for an instant be adorned with a rag of the purple.

The separation of the civil and military orders, whose union had made the fortune of the Republic

and formed the great administrations of the early Empire,³ is still



LEGIONARY WITH HELMET, ARMED WITH THE PILUM.²

¹ Constitution of Diocletian, in the *Codex Just.* xii. 34, 2, and maintained by his successors. Cf. *Codex Theod.* viii. 4, 28, anno 423, and *Codex Just.* x. 31, 55: *Si quis decurio ausus fuerit ullam affectare militiam . . . ad conditionem propriam retrahatur, anno 436.*

² Found at Wiesbaden and preserved in the museum of that city (Lindenschmit, *op. cit.*).

³ See Vol. VI. p. 197.

further marked by the creation of a new grade, that of *dux*, or general-in-chief having no territorial authority, and consequently having no civil interests to protect. This measure, which is seen dawning under Septimius Severus, and became established in a general manner in 237 A. D.,¹ was useful, for it has endured to this day; but with the condition that the high military posts should be assigned only to men worthy of holding them, and the further condition that military honors should never open the way to high civil office. But Macrinus gave to two freedmen the government of Dacia and Pannonia, and to a former spy, who knew not how to read,² the consulship and the office of urban prefect. A few years later a man of mixed race, Getan and Alanian, a mere soldier, who had spent his life in the camps, was invested with the purple of the Caesars; and he by whom this Emperor was overthrown was himself the son of a blacksmith.³

This army, now forbidden to the nobility of the Empire, and from which citizens even were shortly to be debarred, was recruited from the dregs of the provincial population. Since the time of Septimius Severus a jurisconsult could say: "Formerly the military service was obligatory, and he was punished with death who did not respond to the call. Now we have abandoned this severity, because our cohorts are recruited from volunteers."⁴ But these volunteers were worthless wretches who had neither household gods nor homes, like those vagabonds with whom in the last century the recruiting officers of the French army filled their regiments, where they became the soldiers of Rossbach. There was indeed a method of recruiting, or, more properly, of conscription, — every city was required to furnish a definite number of men and horses; and this was a tax upon property. Both were obtained as cheaply as possible, and delivered over to the recruiting officer (*productio tironum et equorum*). The following words are in the text of the law, under the head of municipal obligations: "The furnishing of recruits, horses, and other animals or necessary things . . . is a personal obligation."⁵

¹ See the senatus-consultum sent at this date to the proconsuls and military chiefs (Capit., *Maximin*, 15).

² Dion, lxxviii. 14.

³ Pupienus was, it is said, the son of a blacksmith or a wheelwright.

⁴ Arrius Menander, *Digest*, xlix. 16, 4, sec. 10.

⁵ Arcadius Charisius, in the *Digest*, l. 4, 18, sec 13.

Besides these soldiers furnished by contract, there were others who were an actual danger to the state, — those obtained from among the nations whom the army had to fight. Aurelius Victor, speaking of the legions of that time, writes: “The soldiers — the Barbarians, I had almost said.”¹ When Aurelian was intrusted with the defence of Thrace, the Emperor gave him a legion; but also, three hundred Ituraean archers, six hundred Armenians, one hundred and fifty Arabs, two hundred Saracens, four hundred men of Mesopotamia, and eight hundred *cataphracti* (men clad in mail), who were to come from the same region; and to show him that he could count on capable subordinates, Valerian wrote to him: “You will have with you Hartomund, Haldegast, Hildemund, and Cariovix,”² — all Germans. At the battle of Emesa, in 272, one of the best generals in the army, Pompeianus,³ was a Frank. The Barbaric origin of many others is concealed under Roman names. These Lembazii, Riparenses, Castriani, and Dacisci, who at that time formed the entire garrison of Rome, were certainly not all men of the old provinces.⁴ The Roman army was composed, therefore, in the different ages of its history, in the following manner, — first, of citizens; then, of Italians; then, of provincials; and now the Barbarians are entering: it is a descending scale.

Following the able policy of the Republican Senate, the Emperors, in concluding a treaty with the Goths or Vandals, stipulated that the children of the Barbarians should be given up as hostages, and received them, both boys and girls, into the noblest houses in Rome. The boys were educated like the Roman youth, and the girls were married to Roman officers, in the intention that these wives should keep their husbands informed of what was going on over the frontier. Hunila was of royal blood among the Goths: Aurelian gave her a handsome dowry and married her to Bonosus, one of his generals, — a valiant boon companion, who in a battle of cups defeated all the Barbarians and plucked from them their most secret thoughts.⁵

¹ Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 37: *Militibus ac paene barbaris*. After defeating an army of Goths, Claudius II. selected a number to fill the gaps in his cohorts. Ten years later Probus incorporated sixteen thousand Germans into his legions; all the Emperors did the same. Under Theodosius Barbarians were more numerous than Romans in the Roman army.

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 11.

³ Saint Jerome, *Chron. ad ann.* 272.

⁴ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 38.

⁵ *Id.*, *Bon.* 14.

Certainly there is no heroism in military virtues like these; but there was not a hero left under the standards. In the time of Alexander Severus the Syrian legions declined to fight against the Persians,¹ and at Trebizond and Chalcedon, Romans more numerous than the Goths fled before them.² Finally, from among these men who resembled the soldiers of Caesar in nothing except their costume, went out deserters who carried over to the enemy the secret of Roman tactics, drilled his troops, forged his weapons, built his ships, even constructed for him engines of war wherewith to attack fortresses. At the siege of Philippopolis the Goths made use of all the engineering contrivances known to the Romans of the time.³ Implacable, as traitors are to those whom they have betrayed, these men incited invasions, showed the way, and took the lead in pillage, while their

ITURAEAN ARCHER.⁴

¹ Dion, lxxx. 4. He adds that they were disposed to go over to the enemy.

² See, in Zosimus, the invasion of Asia Minor by the Goths and Scythians in the time of Valerian. Jordanes says (16) of deserting legionaries in the time of Decius and of Philip: . . . *Milites ad regis Gothorum auxilium confugerunt*. A multitude of the soldiers of Niger had gone over to the Parthians; and to leave the door open for their return, Severus had modified the terrible penalties denounced by law against deserters.

³ See Dexippus, No. 2, in vol. iii. p. 678, of the *Fragmenta historicum Graecorum* (Didot).

⁴ The inscription is as follows: MONIBVS JEROMBALI F[ilius] MIL[es] COH[ortis] I ITVRAEOR[um] ANN[orum] L. STIP[endi]orum XVI H[ic] S[itus] E[st]. Monument

comrades remaining under the standards made and unmade emperors. It was a deserter who, in 259, guided the Goths in the conquest of Bithynia, and it was perhaps a military revolt which gave up to the Persians the Emperor Valerian.¹

Thus we see the standard is lowered among the soldiers, as it is among the officers, and consequently in the government. And whose is the fault? It is the fault of the citizens of every rank, who will no longer endure the military service, and of the rulers, who know not how to compel them to it. We have already remarked that the appearance of an excellent military organization always marks the advent of a new dominion, for the reason that the army in many respects sums up in itself the civilization of a people. The empires of Persia and of Athens, of Thebes and of Macedon, of Carthage and of Rome, succeed each other in the order of the improvements made in military institutions. At the period with which we are now occupied these improvements had reached a limit which could be passed only by the aid of sciences unknown to antiquity, and centuries were yet to pass before these new sciences should be discovered. The Greek genius, which was above all speculative, had been able to create mathematics and astronomy, and to begin mechanics and natural history; but mathematics alone have not—as chemistry and physics have—the virtue of leading man to the control of the material world; and these poets, these philosophers, these artists, who had made the civilization of the old world, were not able to arm it with forces conquered from Nature. To protect itself against the Barbarians the Roman world had, therefore, means scarcely, if at all, superior to those which the Barbarians employed. When, by the pensions which the imperial government paid and by the commerce which the Roman traders carried on in time of peace, by the booty snatched from the provinces and by the lessons which deserters taught them, the Goths, the Alemanni, and the Franks had obtained what was necessary for the development of their metallurgic industries, they were able to give themselves an armament almost as formidable as that which the Romans possessed. In courage they had the superiority; and their religion—like that which Mahomet gave to the found at Mayence; now in the museum of that city. Cf. Lindenschmit, *Tracht*, etc., pl. v. No. 3, and p. 22.

¹ Zonaras, xii. 23.

Barbarians of the South—inspired them with a martial ardor which the Romans no longer possessed. On the field of battle the legions had the advantage of discipline, of a better order, and of some remaining traditions of military art; and this superiority would have secured to the Empire constant victories if these legions, which for two centuries had been the strength of the state and the support of the Emperor, had not now become the scourge of the one and the terror of the other. Accordingly, the chief care of the succeeding rulers will be to put an end to barrack-revolts by a violent reaction against the military order. To obtain protection from the continual attacks of the soldiery they will effect an administrative revolution which will appear to give themselves more security, but will not increase the safety of the Empire; they will divide the army, in order to have less reason to fear it, and they will compose it of Barbarians, in the hope that these foreigners will be more docile.

III. — THE ADMINISTRATION.

IN the age preceding, the nobles were the governing class; a regular and slow ascending movement constantly replaced the Roman aristocracy, which was becoming exhausted, by a provincial aristocracy full of life and experience. The latter obtained seats in the Senate as rapidly as its members, by their services in the cities and the legions, gained the notice of the Emperor; and the sons of these senators, before succeeding their fathers in the curiae, were prepared for their high office by an excellent administrative education. Revolutions had now changed this favorable condition of affairs.

Enfeebled by the institution of Hadrian's *consilium principis*, and despoiled of its last powers by the imperial council of Alexander Severus, the Senate had nothing to do in the state; accordingly, it mattered little that Caracalla called Egyptians and Palmyrenes to sit with the Conscript Fathers;¹ Elagabalus, Alexander Severus and Philip, Syrians and Arabs;² and Maximin, Thracians.

¹ De Vogüé, *Inscr. araméennes de Palmyre*, Nos. 20-22.

² Zosimus (i. 19) says that Philip placed all his relatives in the higher offices; and we may note that Philip was the son of a Bedouin, a robber-chief.

The higher grades in the army, the really important offices in the state, even the imperial dignity, being the prey of soldiers of fortune, the Senate and the public offices were filled with the friends of the Emperor, who selected them from the society in which he himself had lived. From this it resulted that the administration, as well as the army, was recruited from the lower strata of the population; that the worth of the men who influenced public affairs diminished; and that life everywhere fell to a lower level.

The movement of concentration which had taken place in Rome in the last centuries of the Republic went on in the provincial cities. The number of the *humiliores* increased, that of the *honestiores* diminished; and in the provincial cities are seen only two classes,—the decurions and the common people. The latter lost their last rights, even the comitia falling into desuetude; almost everywhere the curia, instead of the popular assembly, was the electoral body,¹ and the office of decurion had become hereditary.²

But the elections had become very onerous to the persons elected. In Pliny's time to enter a municipal senate did not involve great expense; at the period of which we are now speaking a perpetual flamen paid 82,000 sesterces for his office.³ Of this he expended 30,000 for a statue to adorn the city; 20,000 for the required gift to the decurions; and he promised the people scenic games, with a distribution of money. Prodigalities like these were possible to the rich only; consequently it was inevitable that many should seek in their office the means of indemnifying themselves, as the republican proconsuls had been wont to repair, in a year of provincial government, their fortunes ruined by an election in the Forum. The Empire had put an end to this colossal plundering; and it was obliged also to arrest the extortions of the municipal magistrates.⁴ But to do this, the home government found it

¹ Africa still held electoral comitia in the time of Constantine (*Code Theod.* xii. 15, 1); and Julian, in the *Misopogon*, speaks in the case of Antioch of senators elected by the people, and later of municipal judges who had no regard for justice.

² See in the *Digest*, l. 2, the section *De Filiis decurionum*.

³ This amount was paid into the municipal treasury *ob honorem flaminii* (L. Renier, *Bull. de l'Acad. des inser.*, June, 1878; inscription of the time of Elagabalus, recently found at Philippeville). This, it is true, is an individual instance.

⁴ These were of very early date. Cicero (*Ad Att.* vi. 2) avers that he had made those of Cilicia restore their ill-gotten gains; and he adds that these restitutions enabled the province to pay the arrears of its taxes.

necessary to administer the provinces which formerly it had been contented with ruling.

The time of the family of the Severi is that of the most renowned jurisconsults of Rome. Now these incomparable logicians sought, on their part, to establish everywhere and in all cases the idea of the rights of the state, — which rights had been so extensive in the ancient republics. Yielding to the influence of these eminent men, as well as to the social necessity of which we have just spoken, the Emperors encroached upon the municipal liberties; and this ever-increasing interference of the imperial agents, which the citizens themselves solicited or made needful, impaired and destroyed the vitality of the municipal rule. The finances of the cities are now in the hands of the Emperor's curators; the irenarchs, appointed to maintain public order, must have the approbation of the Emperor's representative before entering upon their office;¹ new taxes are levied, public works are executed, only with the authorization of the governor, who annuls the decisions of the local senate when they are displeasing to him (*ambitiosa decreta*), and the elections are made, subject to his approval, when he does not himself directly appoint the candidates.² The duumvirs act as judges only in cases where a small sum is involved, and the practice of appeal to the Roman magistrate will have soon reduced the duumviral jurisdiction to nothing more than the equivalent of a French *justice de paix*.³ Thus, municipal honors losing their dignity, the obligations they impose seem more onerous, and, through different reasons, pagans and Christians alike avoid them. But the government, already seeking to render the decurions responsible for the payment of the land-tax,⁴ watches carefully to see that the provincial

¹ . . . *Cum a praeside ex inquisitione eligatur* (*Digest*, l. 8, 9, sect. 7). See (*ibid.* xxii. 1, 33) the rights which Ulpian attributes to the *praeses* in respect to the financial administration of the city: . . . *Qui disciplinae publicae et corrigendis moribus praeficitur* (*ibid.* l. 4, 18, sect. 7) . . . *A decurionibus, iudicio praesidum . . . nominentur* (*Code*, x. 75). An ordinance of Alexander Severus gives the governor of a province the right to annul the election of a decurion elected by persons unfriendly to the latter for the purpose of imposing ruinous expenses upon him.

² *Digest*, xlix. 4, sects. 3, 4. "When he writes to the Senate," says Ulpian, "*ut Gaium Seium creent magistratum*, it is advice rather than command." But the advice was as potent as an order.

³ [The *justice de paix* decides debts not above a hundred francs. — ED.]

⁴ Many sentences in the *Digest* show this tendency from the beginning of the third century; but it is not until the time of Constantine that we find this system completely established. For the municipal organization of the first century, see in Vol. VI. of this work the whole of

senates are kept full; a man seeking to escape this duty by taking refuge in another city, is brought back,¹ or, if he cannot be found, his property is confiscated for the use of the curia. A criminal sentence does not free a man from the duty of service as decurion; on the expiration of his term of punishment he returns into the senate.² When it was a question of receipts, the treasury had no scruples.

The government, which with one hand chained the refractory to municipal honors, with the other threw back privileged persons into the taxable class, in order to make sure that its share in the net revenue of the cities should not be lessened.³ In the time of their prosperity these cities had multiplied exemptions from the *munera*, of which the burden in the general impoverishment now fell heavily upon the tax-payers. The number of physicians, rhetoricians, and grammarians enjoying immunity was reduced,⁴ and the citizen who had been exempted from the *munera* because of his poverty was made taxable, notwithstanding his age, if fortune came to him late in life.⁵ We see that the government tried its best to find functionaries for the cities, and resources to fill their treasuries, — a care beneath which was concealed the very legitimate desire to secure public order and the payment of the state-tax. But this self-interested solicitude obliged the government to intervene daily more and more in municipal affairs. The two centuries of the early Empire show a just balance between the power of the

seet. 2, chap. lxxxiii., and for the first attempt upon the liberties of cities, p. 561 of that volume.

¹ Ulpian, in the *Digest*, l. 2. 1. From this time the great anxiety of the government is to retain the rich in the cities. At an earlier period the number of decurions in the Italian cities was a hundred in each; we have seen (Vol. VI. pp. 56 *et seq.*) that this number was often exceeded. The register of Thamagas contained seventy-two names, and these are all either priests or magistrates. Julian (*Misopogon*) compelled all the rich men of Antioch to enter the curia in that city; and many of his predecessors had probably done the same. The minimum of property required for a seat in the curia had been placed very low: it was twenty-five *jugera* (*Code Theod.* xii. 1, 35, anno 342), or 300 *solidi (aurei)* = \$850 (*Nov. Valent.* III. iii. seet. 4). This *Novella*, which is of the year 439, gives this as a very early figure, *secundum vetera statuta*.

² *Digest*, l. 2, 2, 1 and 3; *Code*, x. 37, 1: *Curiales jubemus ne civitates fugiant . . . fundum . . . scientes fisco esse sociandum*.

³ *Code*, iv. 61, 15. In this constitution Theodosius and Valentinian II. assert that they confirm an ancient custom (*prisca institutio*). It is proper to say that the levy for the state being made only after all the public services of the city had been provided for, the two thirds reserved for the state from the net revenue must have been a very small sum.

⁴ See Vol. VI. p. 107.

⁵ *Digest*, l. 5, 5, *prooem.*

state and the liberty of the cities. While this equilibrium lasted, public prosperity was maintained; when the one was overthrown, the other perished, and the moment of that disaster was near at hand.

The government was not alone responsible for this administrative invasion, which would have been salutary had it been kept within limits.

To understand the slow evolution which led the central power to exercise so strict a control over the cities in which narrow and jealous oligarchies had been formed, we must remember how in the Middle Ages most of the communes came to an end. Their inhabitants also allowed to grow up in their midst a middle-class aristocracy, like that of the Roman decurions, keeping possession of all the public offices and employing the financial resources of the city to promote its private ends. Abuses necessitated the intervention of the suzerain, and, as a consequence, the suppression of the municipal charters. At each epoch the same result was produced by the same causes. It is not that history repeats itself, but there are analogies which make ancient facts intelligible in the light reflected from more recent events. In seeing how our ancestors lost their communal franchises we understand better how those of the Romans were lost.¹ In all times communities have cared little for their rights when their interests were in danger: . . . *neque populus ademptum jus questus est*. To put a stop to certain disorders arising from liberty, an administrative guardianship became necessary, which, exaggerating its legitimate work, soon deprived of life these once vigorous cities.

¹ This is seen in the Middle Ages in countless instances; M. Giry gives yet another instance in the history of the commune of St. Omer. "The provosts had alienated a part of the city's territory; they were accused of maladministration, they were suspected of falsehood and cheating in their accounts; and men grew angry at seeing the municipal offices perpetuated in an aristocracy composed of a few families, whose members, succeeding each other as provosts, passed the city's accounts from hand to hand, and treated the municipal finances as their private inheritance. In 1305 the commune accused the town magistrates, 'after the accustomed way, before the high and noble Madame d'Artoys de Bourgogne as their *droit juge*.'" Something like this has been done in our time. "In Ireland, before 1848, there were seventy-one municipal corporations completely independent. The officers of these corporations went so far as to appoint one another. The corporations of Trim and Kells alienated their territory to allow two or three of the members of the corporation to buy it at a nominal price. That of Naas adjudged to one of its members, for a price of twelve pounds sterling, lands which were worth a hundred; that of Drogheda decided that the poor fund should be exclusively expended for the profit of the members of the corporation and their families." (Arth. Desjardins, *De l'Aliénation des biens de l'État et des communes*, p. 34).

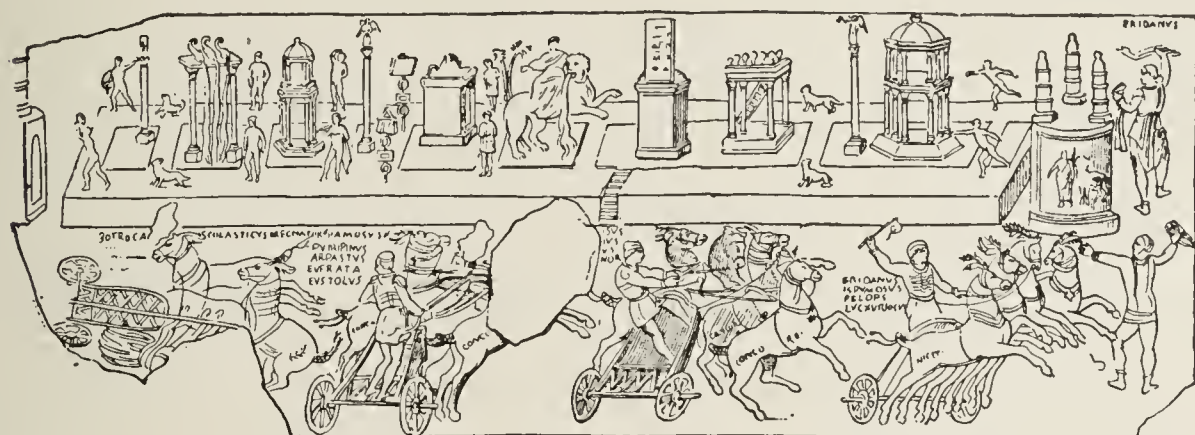
Another evil arose: in undertaking to think and act for all, the imperial government singularly retarded the transaction of public business. A government may be remote, an administration must be close at hand; and when a government administers an immense empire, it necessarily administers it ill. Everything moves slowly, decisions are founded upon documents, far from the parties interested, and out of sight of things themselves, which sometimes speak so eloquently. A document of the year 114 shows that just outside the gates of Rome, under Trajan, it took ten months for the officer in charge of the Caerites to give a signature.¹ When this power, which has suppressed all others by stifling the local life, falls into incapable hands, it must be in its turn suppressed, so to speak, by revolutions. The Emperor having become the universal administrative officer, what, under the Thirty Tyrants, will become of the administration? To put this question is to show what mortal weakness must in those unhappy times have invaded the social body.

Emperors worthy of the name had taken pride in executing great public works, — roads, bridges, monuments of all kinds; when they did not do it themselves, they incited the people of the provinces to these undertakings, and gave them the assistance of cohorts and legions in the work. But the armies now fight with each other, and the rulers who assume this purple — dipped in blood every six months — can think of nothing else but how to protect their own lives. The Empire, abandoned to itself, suspends all work of repair or construction; bridges are broken down, and military roads become impassable. At the same time, the soldiers doing police duty in the interior are called away to increase the number of the troops who are occupied with public affairs rather than with the defence of the country; and so highway robbers re-appear, the roads are no longer safe, traffic is interrupted, and destitution extends.

Although Caracalla's edict had subjected the provinces to new taxes, they now, ravaged by Barbarians or held by usurpers, sent to Rome but insufficient supplies of money; and yet the need increased daily. The wasting of the public revenues by ephemeral

¹ See the letter of the decurions of Caere, *ap. Egger, Historiens d'Auguste*, p. 390, and Orelli, No. 3,787.

Emperors; the lavish gifts made to those adventurers without personal means whom it was necessary to maintain in luxury for the sake of preserving their doubtful fidelity; lastly, a scarcity of money, produced by the continual exportation of the precious metals into countries where the Empire bought much, while selling nothing,—all these causes of poverty compelled recourse to the most disastrous measures of bankrupt governments. Formerly the high offices of the state were held by rich senators, who drew upon their private fortunes in order to defray the expenses of their public position; but now the Emperor is obliged to furnish money for everything. When Aurelian, the son of a poor



GAMES OF THE CIRCUS.¹

freedman, is made consul, Valerian writes to the prefect of the treasury: "On account of his poverty, you will give him, for the games of the circus which he must offer the people, three hundred pieces of gold, three thousand of silver, ten tunics of silk, fifty of Egyptian linen, four Cyprus table-cloths, ten African carpets, ten Mauretanian coverlets, a hundred swine, a hundred sheep; you will cause a public banquet to be served to the knights and senators, and you will furnish for the sacrifice two large animals and two small ones."

Later we shall read of gifts made by Gallienus to Claudius; others obtained from the Emperor lands which did not belong to him. All who assumed the purple in these days perished by a violent death; after the defeat, their partisans were despoiled; and as each province had its usurper, each was exposed to numberless confiscations. The conqueror, not being able to pay his

¹ From a mosaic of Barcelona.

friends with gold, paid them with confiscated property. Claudius Gothicus had received some. After his accession a woman came to claim the possessions of which she had been deprived by Gallienus for the benefit of his lieutenant. "You have taken what belonged to me," she said; but the Emperor answered: "No; as a subject I had then no concern with the execution of the laws. Now, however, as the ruler, it is my duty to attend to it, and I give you back your lands."

GOLD COIN.¹

To put a stop to this shameful method of obtaining wealth, Claudius forbade any one to solicit another's property; that is to say, to denounce as guilty the innocent for the sake of obtaining their possessions. This edict was still another added to the many laws which, like it, were well meant, and, like it also, without lasting effect.

IV.—DECLINE IN INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AND THE ARTS; DEPOPULATION OF THE EMPIRE.

THE recruiting of the laboring classes went on, like that of the administration and of the army, under conditions growing ever more and more unfavorable. We may represent the Roman Empire as formed of a series of concentric zones extended around the Mediterranean Sea. Those nearest to this sea, having been for the longest time centres of civilization, were the most enlightened and wealthy; in proportion as we advance inland in every direction we approach the barbaric world. Rome began by obtaining her slaves from the first zone which conquest gave her. She took them from southern Italy, Sicily, Greece, Greek Asia, and Carthaginian Africa: a hundred and fifty thousand Epirotes were sold at one time by Paulus Aemilius. These slaves, frequently corrupt, but often intelligent and active, furnished the numerous freedmen who became at Rome architects or physicians, teachers or artists, and also the friends and boon companions of the nobles. This zone being subjugated and reduced to peace, war no longer obtained captives in it, and Rome was obliged to seek her working

¹ Claudius Gothicus, laurelled.

class in the second zone, and afterwards in the third. The great slave-markets thus fell back towards the frontiers. The concession of citizenship to the entire Empire fixed them there, and the Barbarians, who furnished the supply, sold the ruder prisoners whom they themselves had captured in the remote depths of the barbaric world. Claudius, Aurelian, and Probus brought home a countless multitude of prisoners, filling the great estates with incapable or dangerous laborers, under whose hands the earth soon ceased to give other than the most meagre harvests.¹ The progressive steps of the Roman decline are marked by the continuous lowering of what may be called the recruiting material of the state; thus the Athenian republic perished, and the great Roman Empire was to be ruined by the same causes.

Agriculture suffered from an evil of long standing. To the political centralization going on in the city and in the state had corresponded a concentration of fortunes and estates;² or rather the second fact had been the cause of the first, and free labor was disappearing from the country. During thirty years of invasion and civil war, agriculture had to support, beside the usual burdens, innumerable requisitions and incessant devastations. Under so many disasters, which only the great landowners could resist, the petty proprietors succumbed. They abandoned their hereditary acres to become colonists, to take, as soldiers, their share in the immense pillage, or to seek in the cities higher wages and a life which they believed would be less severe. In Diocletian's edict, the laborer, the shepherd, the muleteer are paid but a third as much as the joiner, the mason, and mechanics in general; so that there came about an unfortunate situation, which other ages have also seen,—the urban population increased at the expense of the rural population. One class only had gained in numbers,—the proletariat of the cities and of the country, where serfdom was now beginning to be established.³

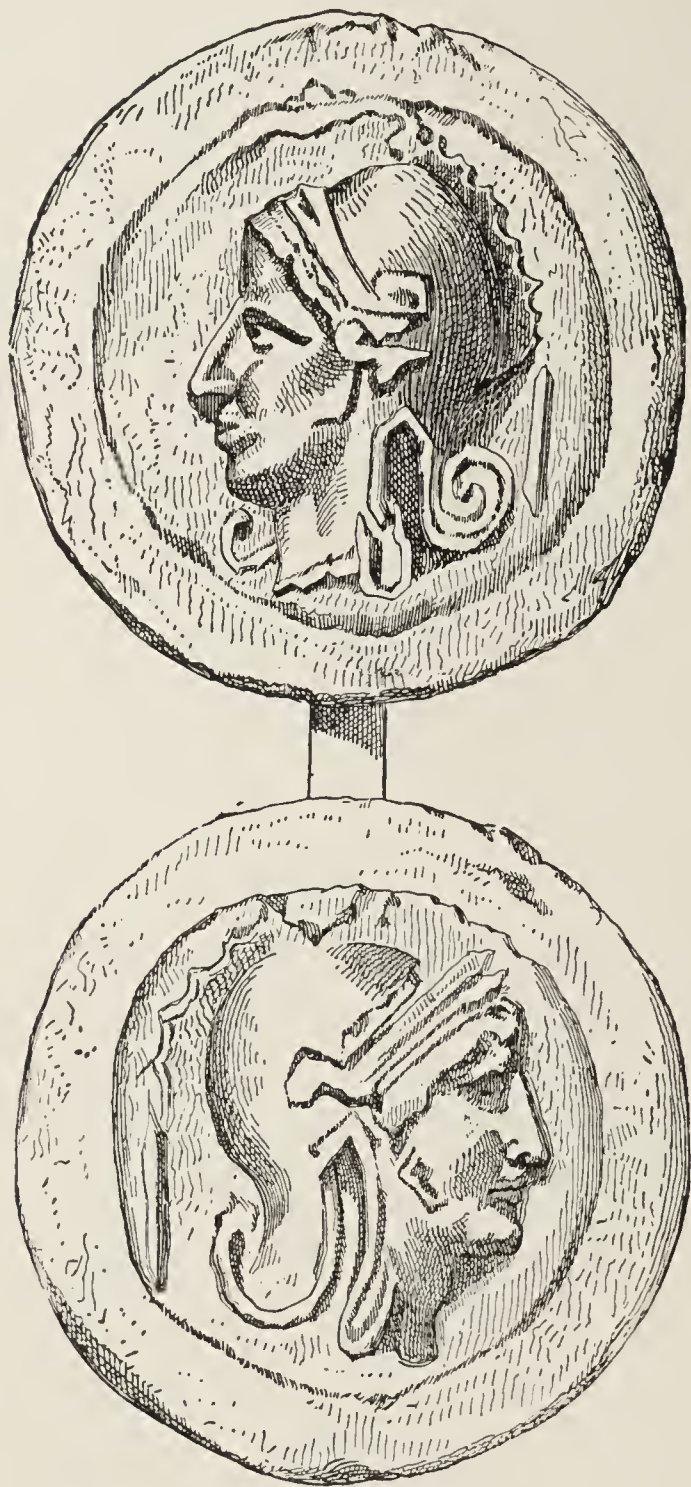
¹ Papinian, fifty years before the period with which we are now concerned, fixed the legal price of slaves at 20 aurei, or 500 denarii (*Digest*, iv. 4, 31). We may conclude from this that slaves were becoming scarce, and consequently dear, for this price is high (see Vol. II. p. 358, note 3); whereas the inferior quality of the slaves of that time ought to have lowered the price.

² We have seen, under Nero, that six landowners divided among themselves the whole province of Africa (Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xviii. 6). In the time of Nerva, Frontinus says further: "In Africa private estates are as large as the whole territory of cities" (*Gromatici veter.* p. 53). Under Theodosius is found the same condition of things.

³ In respect to the *coloni*, see Vol. VI. pp. 13 *et seq.*

Agriculture loves free laborers, and she now had them no longer ; to be richly productive, she has need of the expenditure of capital, and, if we except a few great proprietors, this community had no capital to expend : hence the ground returned but small harvests, and famine was always threatening.

Mechanical industry was no better off. The workshops, recruited from the ignorant and despised proletariat, produced poor work, and the system of corporations destroyed competition. Certain trades, whose existence the government made it a point to protect, had been early constituted as monopolies, and it is said that Alexander Severus endeavored to give all the trades the corporative organization,¹ which moreover private individuals took of their own choice. Everywhere traders and mechanics formed associations, — the bakers of Rome and Ostia, the boatmen of the Saône and the Rhône, the mariners of the Seine, ship-carpenters, ship-brokers, measurers of corn, and the



AS LIBRALIS OF LATIUM.

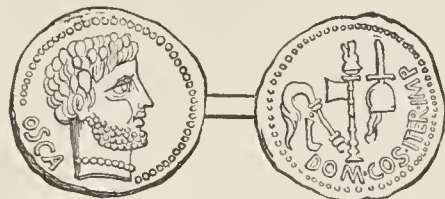
like ; all those who labored with their hands sought security in union, and fortune in the privileges which they obtained from the authority or gave to themselves by closing the common market against their rivals.²

¹ Vol. VI. pp. 96 *et seq.*

² See Vol. VI. p. 107, note 2, the privileges accorded to the traders and laborers connected with the mine of Aljustrel.

Manufacturing industry was still further slackened by the lessened demands of trade now hampered by revolutions, by the cessation of public works, by increasing taxation, and also by piracy and robbery on the highways springing up again, against which the Emperors no longer made war, so occupied were they with their own private quarrels. It further suffered, and perhaps most of all, from an extremely bad monetary system.

The amount of silver and gold in circulation in the Empire was diminishing, — less on account of the mines being exhausted than by reason of the difficulty of obtaining their products. The working of mines, so well conducted under the Early Empire, required, in order to be kept up actively with the processes at that time employed, a resolute discipline; and for the existence of

DENARIUS.¹COPPER COIN.³

this discipline it was essential that the Empire should still have the strong and stable government which it had no longer.² When, in the reign of Valens, the Goths invaded Thrace, all the miners escaped to the Barbarians. The

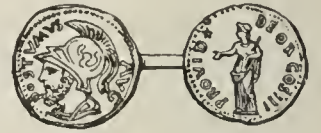
scarcity of the precious metals produced disastrous consequences. The Republic had at first known but one coin, — the bronze as; after the Punic Wars silver became the monetary standard (the sesterce and the denarius). The Early Empire had the gold piece (aureus), and for two hundred years gold was the chief circulating medium. Silver came afterwards, and copper does not seem to have been in use, for we find none in the treasures buried at that time. We

¹ Denarius of Domitius Calvinus of the year 40 B. C.

² Hirschfeld, *Die Bergwerke*, pp. 72–91, and Flach, *Table d'Aljustrel*. Under the Republic and in the first century of the Empire the mines of precious metals and the quarries of marble which belonged to the state were farmed out like the other revenues. In the second century they were placed under the supreme direction of a *procurator Caesaris*, assisted by numerous subordinates for superintendence or direct management (*probatores*). When anarchy invaded the government it also took possession of the mines, whence slaves and criminals constantly made their escape. Observe that the procurator was often one of the Emperor's freedmen, and that centurions, serving, like our discharged soldiers, in many civil occupations, sometimes had the superintendence of the works; thus for the marbles of Synnada, in Phrygia, a centurion had charge of the *caesura*, or cutting (*Mélanges de l'École franç. de Rome*, August, 1882, p. 291).

³ Copper coin of the third century A. D.: C. Postumus. (J. de Witte, *Recherches sur les empereurs qui ont régné dans les Gaules au troisième siècle*. No. 256, pl. xvi.)

have elsewhere explained¹ how it came about that the great republican fortunes, the fruits of conquest, took more than a century to disappear. Public and private wealth still lasted under the Antonines. But in the third century both were seriously impaired. Of this there is twofold proof, — the coins were debased, and in the buried money of that time pieces of gold become more and more rare, and there is a great quantity of base coin and of copper. The aurei found, differ in weight, and we are obliged to conclude that, losing its character of a representative sign of value, the aureus came to be only bullion accepted in trade for its weight, so that traffic went back to the time when buyer and seller needed to be furnished with scales.³

GOLD COIN.²

DENARIUS OF NERO.

This would have been merely an annoyance and a waste of time; the debasement of coin was to persons engaged in business a cause of perpetual deceptions, and even of ruin. Under the Empire the monetary unit was the sesterce, — a coin equal in value to a quarter of the denarius, or one hundredth of the aureus. Now, the silver denarius in the first years of Nero's reign, of which there were ninety-six to the pound, and almost of pure metal, contained in the time of Alexander Severus fifty or sixty per cent of alloy, and from a value of about seventeen cents had fallen to that of about seven.⁴ To this depreciation of silver naturally corresponded an augmentation in the value of gold. The state believed it wise to take advantage of this by requiring all taxes to be paid in aurei.⁵ This was as fraudulent

¹ Vol. VI. pp. 263 *et seq.*

² Gold coin of the third century A. D. : C. Postumus (J. de Witte, *ibid.* pl. xvi. No. 251); Providence on the reverse. Quinarius of gold, or semis, the half of an aureus. The quinarius of silver (or half denarius) was so called because it had the value of five ases. *Denarii*, says Varro, *quod denos aeris valebant, quinarii, quod quinos.*

³ In the fourth century the treasury required, to prevent frauds, that the tax-gatherers should pay their receipts in ingots.

⁴ Two silver pieces of Decius, identical in appearance, are worth, the one about 10½ cents, the other about 6 cents (Mommson, *Hist. de la monnaie romaine*, vol. iii. p. 85, note 1). Accordingly, treasury orders did not, as we have seen (p. 190, note 2), bear the definite figures, so much money, like the 25,000 sesterces which were originally the pay of the legionary tribune, but a mention of so many gold philips and trientes which, put together, would amount to about that sum.

⁵ See on that point p. 81, note 3.

as it would be now to refuse to receive into the public treasuries bank-notes issued by the state at their face value. Or, if a word less harsh be preferred, it was an increase of taxation such as has recently occurred in great states where paper money is below par, when it was decided that custom-dues be paid in gold. The taxpayer, for example, who owed a hundred sesterces, could not pay it, as before, with twenty-five denarii, worth to him in his daily transactions about \$1.75; he must give the tax-gatherer an aureus, of which the value was much greater. After the year 256, silver coin contained not over twenty, and sometimes only five per cent of pure metal. Under Claudius Gothicus, the Antoninianus, the silver coin most common in circulation, was a mixture of copper, tin, and lead, with a whitish coating which gave the pieces when new an appearance of silver. But instead of a precious metal, the possessor of this piece of money had only an alloy of copper; it was nothing



ANTONINIANUS OF
CLAUDIUS GOTHICUS.¹



ARGENTEUS MINUTULUS OF
CARACALLA.

more than a token.² The same government which condemned the counterfeiter to the wild beasts,³ gave a forced currency to the base coin which it put in circulation, and punished with banishment or death those who refused to receive it,⁴ on the ground that the Emperor's image upon the

piece was competent to give it whatever value he chose to assign to it.

The intrinsic value of the aureus was reduced, like that of the silver denarius: Caesar made forty to the pound, Caracalla, fifty, Constantine, seventy-two; and at the same time the amount of pure metal employed decreased, and the quantity of alloy increased, — in the first century, .009; in the second, .062; in the third, still more.⁵

¹ From the *Cabinet de France*.

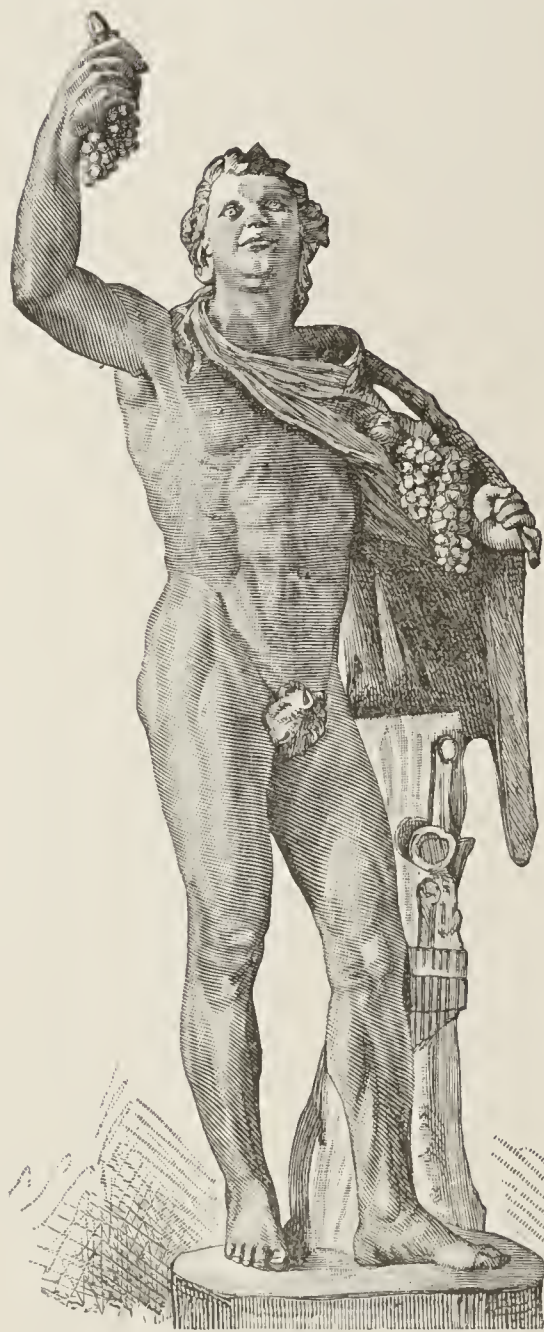
² From Claudius II. to Diocletian there are only very few coins which contain any silver at all (Eckhel, vii. 475). This author remarks that from the time of Claudius all the cities except Alexandria and three cities of Pisidia — Antioch, Seleucia, and Sagalassos — had lost the right of coining money.

³ Ulpian, in the *Digest*, xlviii. 10, 8.

⁴ Paul, *Sent. Recept.* v. 25, 1.

⁵ Lenormant, *La monnaie dans l'antiquité*, i. 202. In respect to the distinction between coins or pieces circulating in trade, — commemorative medals, like the immense gold piece

The Empire, therefore, was in a condition like that of France in her most evil days,—about the middle of the fourteenth cen-



FAUN OF ROSSO ANTICO.²

tury; and it can with justice be said that from the reign of Gallienus to the middle of that of Diocletian, the monetary system of the Romans was a permanent bankruptcy.¹ Under the infliction of these constant disturbances of the currency,—discouraging both to the producer and the trader,—labor diminished; and we have seen that from other causes the article produced lost in quality as well as quantity.

In the region of intellectual and artistic labor the decline was even more manifest.

The religion of the beautiful disappeared with the gods who had inspired it, and in its ruin dragged with it art, which always corresponds to the condition of men's minds, because in order to produce its work it requires to be solicited by the public taste. It had besides a formidable enemy. In its first age Christianity was iconoclastic; it anathematized

pagan art, forbidding the devout to cultivate it, and wherever it could do so, destroyed the statues of the gods. The Bishop of Caesarea,

of Eueratidas, imperial medallions employed as presents to great personages at the epoch of military gifts, and often worn around the neck on a collar, as a decoration; the pieces made for religious offerings or for prizes at certain sacred games; those worn as talismans; theatrical tesserae, tokens, and the like,—see the Introduction to the first volume of Lenormant's work just cited. The custom of women wearing coins about the neck, or set as ornaments, is very ancient.

¹ Mommsen, *Hist. de la monnaie rom.* vol. iii. p. 144, and Lenormant, *ibid.* vol. i. pp. 172 and 184.

² Statue found at Hadrian's Villa (Vatican, *Museo Pio-Clementino*, Cabinet, No. 433).

in the fourth century, would not allow the figure of Christ to be represented; and the rude frescos of the catacombs show what painting became in Christian hands. Art, which was so useless to the new faith, was no more serviceable to what remained of the old.



CONICAL STONES REPRESENTING MELKARTH-BAAL, THE PHOENICIAN HERCULES.¹

What could it do with the black stone of Elagabalus, the conical deities of the Syrians, even with the Ephesian Diana of the fifty breasts,² or with the Olympians made objects of caricature, like the beautiful Ganymede represented as an ape at the feasts of Isis?³

¹ Stones found at Malta, of which one is in the Museum of the Louvre. The Phoenician Hercules was represented in his sanctuary in Tyre by two columns of gold and emerald. The two cones of Malta bear the same inscription in Phoenician and Greek; it is a dedication made by two brothers to Melkath-Baal, "the king of the city" (Communication of M. Ph. Berger). In respect to conical stones, see above, p. 108, note 1.

² See Vol. IV. p. 168; and yet the Greeks had succeeded in giving to this deformed object all the beauty that it was capable of receiving.

³ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, xi.

How could men have presented in marble or in bronze the hypostases of the neo-Platonists and the confused abstractions of the Gnostics? From the temple and the forum, art had fallen to the boudoir.



GANYMEDE AS AN APE, ON A LAMP IN THE MUSEUM OF THE LOUVRE.

It at first maintained itself by imitating ancient methods. But this imitation growing more feeble as the models were more remote, it became impossible to produce anything that was not dull and affected. The inspiration being lost, nothing remained except a handicraft; and the unworthy successors of the masters worked by contract for an impoverished and coarse community which had lost all taste for the elegance of earlier days. Compare the busts of this period with the statues of the Early Empire,¹ or the sculptures of the Arch of Con-

stantine with those of the Antonine age, — even the pretty trifles, the exquisite vases, the graceful furniture of Pompeii, with the ceramics and the heavy ornamentation of the end of the third century, — and it will be evident that barbarism is approaching.²

Stern preachers of philosophy and religion had driven laughter away, while public calamities had put an end to happiness, and

¹ Eckhel (vii. 458) says of the bronze coins of Postumus, Victorinus, and Tetricus: *Ultimam plerique barbariem redolent, sic ut non in provincia . . . sed Sarmatas inter Gothosque . . . percussi videri possint*. Many others of these Emperors are coins of the Early Empire re-minted (De Witte, *Revue numism.* vi. 1861). At the same time, M. de Witte has published many fine bronze coins of Postumus, and the difference is explained by the diversity of mints. That of Lyons especially, which belonged to the Gallic Emperor, had traditions and artists enabling it still to issue fine coins, and we shall see them until the close of the century.

² See, in the *Congrès archéologique de France*, vol. xlvii. 1881, pp. 220-239, the remarks of Dr. Plicque upon the Gallo-Roman pottery made at Lezoux (Puy-de-Dôme).

art, which is the joy of life, no longer was able to adorn it: the sadness of the Middle Ages was beginning.

We must also bear in mind the danger from the Barbarians. The fear of invasion obliged the cities, which had remained open during "the Roman Peace," to shut themselves up within walls; and to build these walls they had in many places already destroyed the edifices that more fortunate generations had constructed. At Tours, at Orleans, at Angers, at Bordeaux, at Saintes, at Narbonne, at Reims, at Poitiers and in many other cities of Gaul, we find in the old walls fragments of columns or entablatures, monumental stones and inscriptions. Themistocles had pursued a similar course in Athens, but Pericles and Pheidias came after him; while after the great architects of the Antonines there were only masons.¹

The Greek language was still written with elegance. Oppianus of Cilicia and Babrius (if Babrius belongs to the third century) are two good versifiers, almost two poets; the name of Longinus is always mentioned with respect; and Photius, in a transport of generosity, places the historian Dexippos beside

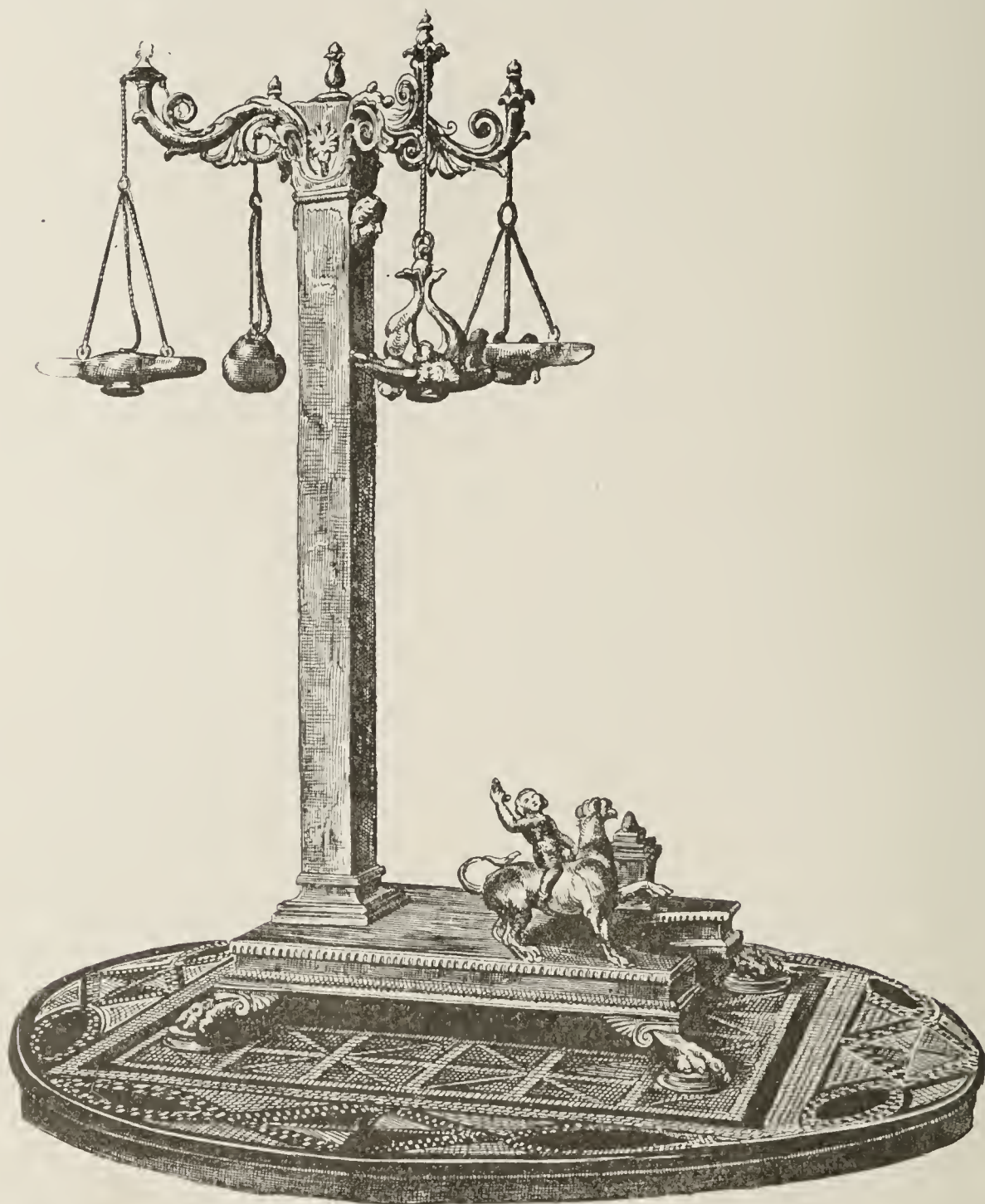


CANDELABRUM OF HADRIAN'S VILLA
(MARBLE).²

¹ De Caumont, *Cours d'ant. mon.* 8th part, *passim*; Batissier, *Histoire de l'art monumental*; *Revue archéol.* November, 1877, p. 351; and *Mémoires de la Société archéol. de Bordeaux*, 1880, pp. 63 *et seq.*

² On the base, Jupiter; the other sides represent Juno and Minerva (Vatican, Gallery of Statues, No. 412).

Thucydides. We certainly shall not give this honor either to Dion Cassius or Herodian, both of whom, however, have frequently been useful to us. Aelian and Philostratus resemble one another in their simple-minded credulity ; we are indebted alike to Diogenes Laertius



CANDELABRUM FROM THE HOUSE OF DIOMEDES AT POMPEII.

and Athenaeus for much precious information ; and the vigorous intellect of Origen gives promise of the splendor which the Greek Fathers of the subsequent century will cast over the Church. The Roman world was turning more and more towards the East ; there is life nowhere else at this time.

As for Latin literature, it was absolute nullity. There were still men of letters, for there always must be in a civilized society. But the writers of the time saw only the lesser sides of things; they take anecdote for history, rhetoric for eloquence, versification for poetry.¹ The union, once so fruitful, between the genius of Rome and that of Athens no longer exists; and this divorce of the two literatures is a sign which foretells the approaching separation between the two empires.² The Latin mind grows visibly weaker, except in the Church, where Cyprian at Carthage is the precursor of Augustine at Hippo.

Moreover the Christians have also their share in the decline of the Empire. A half-century of tranquillity had singularly increased their number; but although life, which was enfeebled in the pagan world, was ardent in their communities, they were for the state a cause of weakness rather than strength. The Roman law punished celibacy; they honored it. The great development of the monastic system comes in the following century; but many believers already shunned marriage, which their clergy, as a rule, avoided.³ They lived by themselves, avoiding all intercourse with the pagans, except in cases of absolute necessity, and abhorred the sacrilegious festivals of the latter. Foreigners in the cities, whose honors they rejected, they were the same also in the Empire, which they refused to defend by arms,⁴ and without displeasure they saw the approach of the Barbarians. On the way to execution Saint Marianus exclaimed: "God will avenge the blood of the righteous; I hear, I see the white horsemen coming!" and Commodianus depicts in barbaric verse the Goths marching

¹ We must, however, regret the *Memoirs* of Septimius Severus, and also perhaps the *History* of Marius Maximus, often quoted by the compilers of the *Augustan History*, — although Vopiscus (*Firmus*, 1) says of this writer: *Homo omnium verbosissimus, qui et mythistoricis se voluminibus implicavit*, — and some other chroniclers of whom we know scarcely more than the names. There remain three verses written by the Emperor Gallienus, a fragment of an epithalamium which he composed for the marriage of one of his nephews. Censorinus wrote his treatise *De Die natali* in 239. Two other grammarians, Nonius Marcellus and Festus, are sometimes said to belong to the third century. The two versifiers Nemesianus and Calpurnius come at the close of the century, and cannot be placed in the list of true poets; Calpurnius is a very skilful maker of verses.

² In the fourth century the Eastern bishops and most illustrious doctors of the Church were ignorant of Latin.

³ See on this subject, pp. 54 *et seq.*

⁴ See p. 48 of this volume, and also what is said by Aelius Aristides (ii. 402, ed. Dindorf) of Christians who are unwilling to participate in the affairs of the city.

upon Rome with "the destroyer king,"¹ to bring to nought the enemies of the saints and to put the Senate under the yoke. Marianus and "Christ's beggar" were right in announcing to the persecutors an approaching expiation; but others were wrong in making themselves the instruments of it. In Pontus, the Christians united with the Goths to pillage the pagans, overthrow the idols, and burn the temples.² At last the Emperors, taking alarm, sought to extirpate by fire and sword that refractory element which the menaces of the law and judicial executions had not been able to hold in check. Thenceforth terror was to brood over the nations, the purest blood was to flow, and something like a civil war was to be added to the foreign war.

The latter had the character of wars among savages. The Western provinces have already witnessed scenes as terrible as those of the American frontier when the savages swoop down upon it, scalping the men, carrying off the women, and leaving the buildings a mass of smoking ruins. Everywhere the invaders found, as guides to the richest dwellings and the best-concealed treasures, slaves of barbaric origin, who regarded them as liberators. Thrace and Greece and Asia Minor also beheld bloodshed and devastation and long trains of captives, whom the Barbarians, wearied with expeditions and satiated with plunder, carried away with them to their encampments in the North. At each new invasion the ravages extended farther,—first by land, then by sea.

¹ *Commod. episc. Afric. Carmen apologeticum*, in the *Spicilegium Solesmense* of Dom Pitra, i. 43. Commodianus calls the Gothic king Apoleon, from ἀπόλλυμι, to ruin, to destroy. "He marches upon Rome," says this old author, "with thousands of Gentiles, and . . . makes captive the vanquished. Many senators shall with them weep in chains. . . . Meanwhile these Gentiles will everywhere cherish the Christians, and, rejoicing, seek them out as brethren . . ." (verses 800–815). From verse 801 on, the *Carmen* is believed to have been written at the exact time with which we are now occupied, before the persecution of Decius in 238. Tertullian, in his *Apol.* 37, addressed to the Roman magistrates, calls upon them to regard it as a merit in the Christians that they did not favor the attacks of the Mauretanians upon Hadrian, of the Mareomanni upon Marcus Aurelius, of the Parthians upon Severus, — which proves that in his heart the idea of aiding the enemies of the Empire was not repugnant to him. Two centuries later, Salvianus, in his *De Gubernatione Dei*, still extolled, in the midst of the calamities of an invasion, "the virtues of the Barbarians, who scorn all those infamous practices which the Romans permit. Vice, which is with them the exception, is the rule among us." This is the same spirit which, in the first century, led Saint John to condemn "the great whore." See p. 49 of this volume.

² See the fifth canon of Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus in Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, iii. 262, who adds: *Ista Barbarorum incursio gravissimis inter christianos perpetrandis delictis occasionem praebuilt.*

The Goths were soon to construct vessels and carry devastation along all coasts. "Hordes of Scythians," says Ammianus Marcellinus, "crossing with two thousand vessels the Bosphorus and the Propontis, devastated the shores of the Aegean. . . . All the cities of Pamphylia suffered the horrors of a siege; Anchialos was taken; many islands were ravaged; and a multitude of enemies long surrounded Cyzicus and Thessalonica. Fire was carried through all Macedon; Epirus, Thessaly, and Greece suffered invasion."¹ The rich cities bordering the Sea of the Cyclades were obliged to rebuild their walls, which in two centuries of peace had been suffered to fall into decay, the Athenians to resume their weapons, grown rusty since the time of Sylla, and the Peloponnesians to bar their isthmus with a wall.² Everywhere was fighting and bloodshed. At Philippopolis a hundred thousand dead bodies, it was said, lay beneath the ruins. The provinces unvisited by the Franks and Goths had other plunderers; in Sicily freebooters became so numerous that this once favored island seemed ravaged by a new Servile war.

Man, directing his strength against himself, suspended his struggle against the powers of Nature, which resumed their sway and emphasized it with cruel energy. From the accumulated ruins, the untilled ground, and the undrained waters, emerged contagion. The Empire seemed a great body in dissolution, exhaling deadly miasma. For twelve years (250-262) there was constantly a pestilence in the provinces. At one time, in Rome and Achaia, five thousand persons died daily; at Alexandria there was not a house without its dead; and the army of Valerian was reduced by sickness before encountering the archers of Sapor.

To these scourges was added another. The volcanic belt which extends in two directions,—from the Alps of Friuli across Italy and Sicily to Africa, and from the Adriatic to the Aegean Sea and the coasts of Syria,—resumed its activity. The earth was shaken, and gave forth dull rumbling sounds; the sky was black for many days; chasms yawned in the ground; and the sea, rushing in tremendous waves upon the shore, destroyed many cities.

¹ xxxi. 5. The picture which Zosimus (i. 23) traces of these devastations is even more gloomy.

² Zosimus, i. 29; the *Syncellus*, i. 715 (Bonn ed.); Zonaras, xii. 22.

It seemed as if the threats uttered by the Christians concerning the end of the world were about to be fulfilled. The Sibylline books, being consulted, ordered a sacrifice to Jupiter Salutaris.¹

A document preserved by Eusebius sums up in brief and terrible words this situation of the Empire. In the capital of Egypt the number of persons between the ages of fourteen and eighty, inscribed, during the reign of Gallienus, on the registers of the alimentary institution, did not exceed the number of the men from forty to seventy years old who formerly had shared in these distributions.² Alexandria therefore had at this time lost more than one half of her population. But if such were the case in a city which had never seen a Barbarian,³ what must have been the condition of the provinces where they had made so many victims! It would not be going too far to say that in the space of twenty years the portion of the human race contained within the limits of the Empire, and formerly so prosperous, had diminished by one half. Such was one of the effects of governmental anarchy and of the first entrance of the Germanic race into the Graeco-Roman world.

We have admired the Early Empire promoting order, security, and industry,—the chief function of government in all ages, and its justification in periods of absolute power,—and we have repeated the words of gratitude that its subjects at that time so often uttered. It is now our duty to show these same subjects disaffected towards rulers who were not able to defend them, and who ruined them by excessive taxation. Rome is no longer the sovereign goddess in whom all confide. Each province desires to have its own emperor; even dynasties of Gallic and Syrian origin appear. This is what a half century of revolutions has made of the flourishing empire of the Antonines and Severus. In states where the ruler is everything, and institutions are nothing, decline may rapidly succeed greatness; for while there are never providential men,

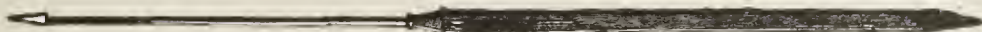
¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 4 and 5.

² *Hist. eccl.* vii. 21, from a letter of Dionysios, the bishop of Alexandria. In France, out of every million of inhabitants there are 789,559 between the ages of 18 and 80, and 267,652 between the ages of 40 and 70. The proportion between these two numbers is 2.95 to 1.

³ Egypt had suffered no invasion, but had been for twelve years agitated with sanguinary tumults, which the carelessness of the general government had allowed to break out in many other places (Euseb., *ibid.*, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 16).

there are necessary men. Let Trajan, Hadrian, or Severus be at the head of the government, and a hundred million Romans live in quiet and prosperity; let incapable men be there, and disorder is in the armies, and the Barbarians are in the provinces. (Civilization advances, not by means of the masses, but by means of great men; Nature at that time producing no such men, civilization fell away.)

Probably false



PILUM.

CHAPTER XCVI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF DECIUS TO THE DEATH OF GALLIENUS (249-268).

PARTIAL INVASIONS THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE.

I. — DECIUS (249-251 A.D.); GOTHS AND CHRISTIANS.

C MESSIUS QUINTUS TRAJANUS DECIUS was born of a Roman family, living in the town of Budalia near Sirmium: in the year 201, according to Aurelius Victor; in 191, according to



ETRUSCILLA, WIFE OF DECIUS
(BRONZE MEDALLION).

the *Chronicle of Alexandria*. He heads the long list of Illyrian Emperors, many of whom were destined to do the state great service. They were not possessed of brilliant qualities, but they were men of accurate minds



TRAJAN DECIUS
(BRONZE MEDALLION).

and energetic character, as might be expected from natives of those poor and warlike provinces.

Decius was of humble origin, and rose to distinction through his military career.¹ The old authors² praise him very highly; but his reign does not justify their eulogiums: it was extremely short, and the history of it is singularly confused and contains many contradictions. Three facts, however, are distinct, and they suffice, — a war against the Goths; the re-establishment of the

¹ *Militiae gradu ad imperium* (Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 29).

² Especially Zosimus (i. 21-23) and Aur. Victor (29).

ensorship (which indicates a return towards ancient customs); and, as a result of this, a persecution against the great innovation of the times, Christianity.

After his victory near Verona (September, 249),¹ Decius went to Rome with his son, Quintus Herennius Etruscus, whom he had named Caesar;² but he was almost immediately forced to leave the city to repel an invasion of the Goths.

Confiding in the successes he had obtained in Thrace over these Barbarians, Gordian III. had refused the annual subsidy promised to this nation. At least Jordanes³ relates that the Gothic king complained of this, and that



QUINTUS HERENNIUS
ETRUSCUS.

he crossed the Danube with thirty thousand of his people to ravage Moesia. Other Barbarians joined him; Roman soldiers even came to get a share in the plunder, and the mountaineers of the Haemus, upon whom Greek and Roman civilization had had but little effect, doubtless furnished the invaders with guides and auxiliaries. The great city of Marcianopolis only escaped by the payment of a ransom.⁵



COIN OF ODESSUS.⁴

When the Goths returned with rich spoils, the Gepidae attempted to plunder the plunderers; a hot engagement followed, in which the former were victorious. These events took place

¹ We have a rescript of his, dated October 16, 249, in the *Code*, x. 16, 3, and, according to Eckhel, Philip was still living on the 29th of August of that year.

² Eckhel, vii. 342. Aurelius Victor (29) says that the Caesar was immediately sent *in Illyrios*. Decius had a second son, C. Valens Hostilianus Messius Quintus, who was also made Caesar and Prince of the Youth.

³ In respect to the pensions paid the Goths since the time of Alexander Severus, see Tillemont, iii. 216. Jordanes, in his *History of the Goths*, gives an abstract of a great work, now lost, by Cassiodorus, the favorite minister of Theodoric. In respect to the Gothic war, see Wietersheim, *op. cit.* vol. ii., where he discusses the contradictory narratives of Jordanes, Zoismus, Zonaras, and Aur. Victor. These details, however, lose all their interest in presence of the too certain fact of the defeat of the Roman army and the death of Decius.

⁴ The god standing at the left, holding a cornucopia and a patera. — The Greek colonies of the coast of Thrace, far from changing the condition of the country, had felt the influence of their Barbarian neighbors, who had modified the manners, the forms of worship, and even the language of these Greeks. An inscription of the year 238 shows at Odessus the Thracian god Derziparos; and upon early coins of that city the great god of the Odessians was Kurza (*Revue archéol.*, March, 1878, p. 114; cf. Dumont, *Inscr. de Thrace*).

⁵ *Post longam obsidionem, accepto praemio ditatus Geta recessit* (Jordanes, 17).

during the reign of Philip. The invasion had been so disastrous for Moesia that the monetary series of the Pontic cities stops with this Emperor; there was no more gold left to coin.

— In the reign of Decius, Kniva, another Gothic king, made a still more formidable invasion; he divided his forces into two bodies, sent one to ravage the part of Moesia which the Roman troops had abandoned in order to concentrate themselves in the strongholds, and with the other, which amounted to seventy thousand men, he attacked Ad Novas, an important city on the Danube. Repulsed by the future Emperor Gallus, at that time *dux* in Moesia, he attempted to surprise Nicopolis, which Trajan



QUINARIUS OF BRONZE OF TRAJAN DECIUS, EQUAL IN VALUE TO TWO SESTERCES.

had built in memory of his Dacian victories. But here the Gothic leader encountered an army which Decius had collected at that point. Unable to force the lines, the Barbarian, with the audacity of an

Indian marauder, left the Emperor in his camp, and going over the Haemus, of which the passes were entirely unguarded, came down upon the great city of Philippopolis, without keeping open a line of retreat. Decius followed him by mountain paths, where the Roman army, both men and horses, suffered severely. The Emperor had reached Beroea, sixty miles eastward from Philippopolis, and believed himself to be still far distant from the Goths, when the Barbarian leader fell upon him unawares, and made great slaughter among the imperial troops. Decius had only time to escape across the Haemus. While the Emperor was reforming an army from the garrisons of fortresses, the Goth seized upon Philippopolis by the connivance of Priscus, the governor of Macedon, who seems to have assumed the purple.¹ The Barbarian king then returned into Moesia, to deposit in a safe place across the Danube the fruits of this fortunate campaign.

¹ Aur. Victor (29) represents the Goths as entering Macedonia, where, according to this author, they instigated the usurpation of Priscus.

On his way he encountered the Emperor, who hoped to avenge the Empire by recapturing from the Goths their booty and their captives, among whom were several persons of rank. The treason of Gallus caused Decius to lose a second battle, in which he perished with his son, and even his dead body was not recovered (November, 251).¹

This was the first Emperor who fell under the enemy's sword within Roman territory. Accordingly, this disaster carried terror through the provinces, and joy and hope into the barbaric world; it was the terrible prologue to the great drama which was not to end until the day when the German race, after covering with blood and ruins all Roman Europe and a part of the East, installed a Barbarian in the palace of Augustus and Trajan.

Two great faults and one mistake had been committed by Decius during his very short reign. Notwithstanding his experience, he neither knew how to prepare for a Gothic war, nor to carry it on sagaciously; and the result was the devastation of two provinces and his own death. As he would have had the credit of a victory, so he must bear the blame of a defeat. His second fault was the persecution of the Christians. The mistake which he made exhibits a political simplicity astonishing in a man of his time; he re-established the censorship, fallen into disuse since the days of Claudius and Domitian, and the Senate invested Valerian with the office. "Undertake the censorship of the world," the Emperor said to him; "determine who shall remain in the Senate, and restore to the equestrian order its renown; take charge of the census and the levying of taxes; make the laws, and appoint to the high military offices. Your supervision will extend as far as the imperial palace and over all magistrates, with the exception of the urban prefect, the consuls, the *rex sacrorum*, and the chief vestal."

If Trebellius Pollio² really read these words in the public acts of the reign, it was a temporary colleague that Decius gave himself,—a sort of interrex, whom he left behind him in the capital at a moment when he and his son were about to depart for a

¹ Before this invasion it would appear that Decius gained some victories in Dacia, for an inscription calls him *restitutor Daciarum* (Orelli, 991), and others against the Germans, *victoriâ Germanica* (Eckhel, vii. 344, 345); but there is no trace of this in the histories.

² *Valerianus*, 1.

dangerous war.¹ We may even discern in this measure a new manifestation of the idea that it was wise to divide the imperial power among several persons, — to have, as in the time of Pupienus and Balbinus, one emperor in the city, and another in the army.

The censorship had wisely been suffered to fall into disuse; for it was an institution which, though useful in a little city, must necessarily be impracticable in a great state. But while it was impossible to restore the past, it appeared practicable to proscribe certain things in the present; and Valerian, who by no means brought back the manners of early Rome, made in the name of Decius, and later in his own name, a bitter war against the new creeds.

The Christian ideal was a higher one than that of Marcus Aurelius, but it was less disinterested. The sage who chanced to be an emperor, asked for nothing in return for his obedience to duty; and hence but few have followed him. The Christian, on the contrary, made his bargain with God, as the pagan world had bargained with Jupiter. In return for their piety, the latter desired earthly good; in return for his, the former felt himself secure of eternal blessedness. His religion, therefore, possessed a powerful attraction for those spirits who were not resigned to submit to the universal law of creation, — after life, death; and the secret of the tomb left to God. To the divine hopes which she held out, the Church added words and deeds of gentleness. In the midst of an aristocratic community, extremely harsh towards the lowly, she taught the equality of all men, great and small, Roman and Barbarian, in the presence of the divine law, and promised to “the servants of God,” whether slaves or senators, the same rewards. Her spirit of universal love, her care for the sick and poor, the new virtues that she required in the place of those that the Romans had lost in losing the dignity of citizenship,² had gained her many hearts.

But while the number of believers was increasing, the virtue of the early days seemed to grow less. If we may accept the words of Saint Cyprian, we must believe that the peace which the Church had now enjoyed for forty years, had been fatal to discipline

¹ Zonaras (xii. 22) even makes Valerian the colleague of Decius.

² Vol. I. p. 148, and Vol. V. pp. 413 *et seq.*

and morals; that piety was dead in the priests, integrity in those who had charge of the finances of the Church, charity in the believers; and that all the vices of the pagan world had invaded the members of Jesus Christ. Instead of assisting the poor, they fraudulently possessed themselves of lands and heritages, and increased their revenues by usury.¹ “We devour one another,”



SAINT CYPRIAN AND SAINT LAWRENCE.²

says a second contemporary; "and our sins have raised a wall between God and us. Haman insults us; Esther, with all the righteous, is in confusion, for all the virgins have suffered their lamps to go out: they are asleep, and the door is shut. When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? The Word has his fan in his hand, that he may cleanse his floor."³ Like all pulpit orators, Saint Cyprian exaggerates. His picture of the "fall" is too dark, as his apologies are too brilliant in

¹ *De Lapsis, passim.*

² On a gilded glass of the catacombs (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. lxxviii. No. 7).

³ Saint Pionius, priest in Smyrna, and martyr in 250. (*Ap. Bollandists*, February 1, p. 45). Reference to the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins: *an omnino dormitaverunt omnes virgines et dormierunt . . . (Id. ibid.)*.

color. Saint Cyprian wrote in the midst of a persecution; since God had permitted it, its justice must be proved, and the irregularities of the Christians became necessary to explain the divine chastisement. Events really had a more natural cause. Since the time of the short persecution under Severus,¹ heroism had not been called out; enthusiasm had diminished, and consequently men's lives become less rigorous. But the hatred between Christians and pagans remained unabated, and the latter, seeing so many woes fall upon the Empire,—invasions of Barbarians, a destructive pestilence, and endless revolutions,—believed the gods offended by the impunity allowed to those who blasphemed them. The government also became uneasy at the presence of this enemy, which, under penalty of its own destruction, the pagan state must either assimilate or destroy. Decius—a harsh and narrow-minded ruler, who in his love of the past believed himself able to resuscitate the dead, restore to the Senate its power and to Jupiter his thunderbolts—undertook to avenge his gods. He promulgated an edict, which was posted in all the cities, ordering search to be made for Christians, and punishment to be inflicted upon them. A war of extermination began. It appeared at first to succeed, because even more skill than cruelty was employed in it. All the efforts of the proconsuls were directed towards obtaining acts of apostasy. “Tortures,” says Saint Cyprian, “were continuous; they were not planned to give the crown, but to exhaust the power of endurance.”² Accordingly, apostasies were numerous. “To save his life, the son gave up the father, the father denounced the son.” “At Carthage the greater number of the brethren deserted at the first threats of the enemy. They did not wait to be questioned, but to preserve the wealth which held their souls captive, they hastened voluntarily to sacrifice to idols; they implored the magistrates to receive them on the instant to burn the impure incense, and not to put off until the morrow that which was to make their eternal ruin sure.” At Alexandria the same scenes took place, and at Smyrna, Rome, and throughout the Empire. Even bishops were seen leading

¹ Origen (*Contra Celsum*, iii.) says that until the time of the great persecution under Decius, there was but “a very small number, easy to count,” of Christians put to death.

² Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 8, 52, 63, and his *De Lapsis*; Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 39, 41; Gregory of Nyssa, in his *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*; Tillemont, iii. 326–345.



THE EMPEROR DECIUS (STATUE OF THE CAPITOL).

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their entire congregations into apostasy. Trophimus of Arles himself accompanied the Christians to pagan altars. Others, with money, bought toleration: the *libellatici* were very numerous. These weaknesses are in human nature, and we have no cause to wonder that Christianity, as it extended, lost something of its early virtue.

However, the persecution of Decius seems not to have been as severe as it has been represented.¹ A sentence of death was not always inevitable. Some were despoiled of their goods; others condemned to exile, or thrown into prison. Babylas of Antioch and Alexander of Jerusalem, of very advanced age, could not support the rigors of imprisonment, and died in consequence. The most formidable, because at that time the most famous, of the Christians, Origen, was loaded with chains and threatened with the stake; but "the man of steel" betrayed no weakness. The torturers were wearied sooner than their victim; he was set at liberty, and lived four years longer.²

As the persecution had been publicly announced, many had time to escape. The most conspicuous leaders, Cyprian of Carthage, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Gregory Thaumaturgus, avoided the peril, quitting their episcopal cities, and taking refuge in some adjacent retreat, whence they could communicate with the faithful. It must have been easy for many others to place themselves in shelter. Of these fugitives some went among the Barbarians, others fled into the desert; and thus, amid persecutions, originated that monastic order which was itself to be the instrument of many future persecutions.

The martyrologies enumerate in this period a considerable number of martyrs; but serious authors dare not guarantee the authenticity of these *Acts*, filled with anachronisms and marvellous legends, like that of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, who, being

¹ Except in Egypt, where there was doubtless a governor particularly bitter against the Christians. In Alexandria, a popular riot had cost the lives of several of them before the arrival of the edict of Decius (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 41). After the publication of the edict there were many apostasies and a certain number of martyrs. However, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria at this time, mentions as martyred after the edict but nine men and four women (*Ibid.*). There must have been more.

² Origen, who was called Ἀδαμάντιος (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 14), was at that time sixty-five years of age. He had recently written (between 245 and 249) his great work against Celsus, the Λόγος ἀληθής. Saint Cyprian says of the African confessors: *Nec cessistis suppliciis, sed vobis potius supplicia cesserunt* (*Ep.* 10).

shut up in a cave and walled in, emerged, living, two centuries after. We should not, however, fall into the opposite extreme, concluding from these pious frauds that there were very few condemnations to death. The edict of Decius reveals an intention on the part of the imperial government to strike a heavy blow;¹ a few leaders of the Church, bishops or teachers, and, as was always the case, many of the common people and slaves, perished. The most illustrious victims were Saint Saturninus, first bishop of Toulouse, Pionius, priest in Smyrna, who by his sacrifice made up for the apostasy of his bishop,² and Fabian, bishop of Rome, whose see remained vacant a year and a half. Pionius was crucified, and with him a Marcionite, — the heretics having their martyrs also. If the latter had told us their story, they would have added glorious chapters to the great and terrible epic of persecution, which across the centuries has kept burning in men's minds the flame of self-devotion, and even to this day incites to noble sacrifices.

The storm let loose upon the Church by him whom Lactantius calls "the accursed beast," lasted in reality but a few months. At the end of the year 250 peace had been almost entirely restored to the Christians, and before the death of Decius all the imprisoned confessors were set free.³ The Emperor had quite other work to do than torturing these inoffensive men on account of their belief. The invading Goths compelled him to occupy himself less with his gods than with the Empire, and he left his undertaking incomplete. The persecution had been no more successful than the censorship of morals; but the latter had been only a harmless whim, while the former had caused tears and blood to be shed, and their trace still rests upon the persecutor's name.

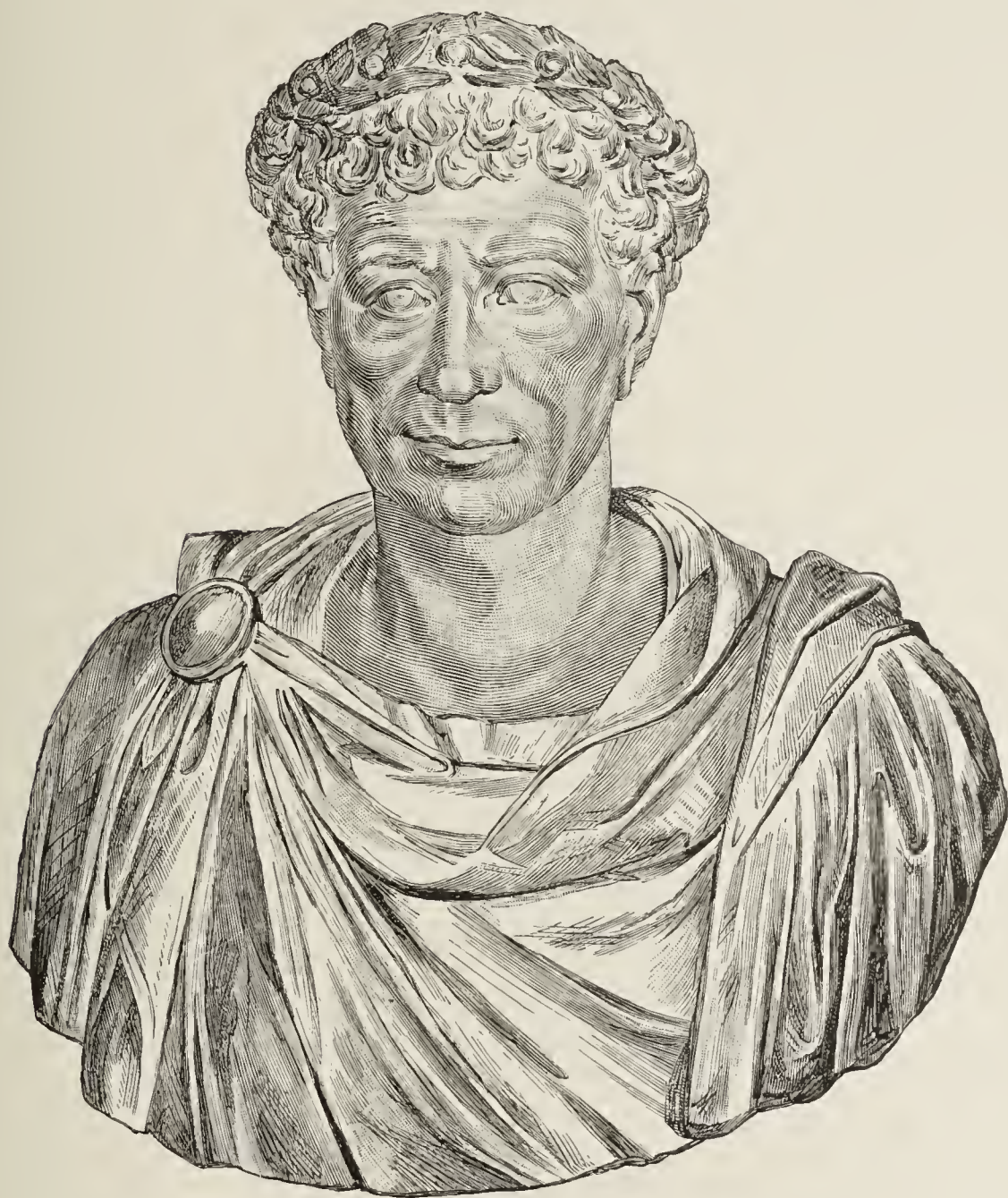
¹ Saint Cyprian (*Ep.* 52) speaks of the hatred of Decius towards the bishops. See, in the *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*, the severity of the orders sent to the governors to bring back the Christians, τῇ τῶν δαιμόνων λατρεία . . . φόβῳ τε καὶ τῇ τῶν αἰκισματῶν ἀναγκῇ.

² A fugitive slave perished with him.

³ If the *Acts* of Saint Acacius are authentic (Bollandists, March 10), Decius himself ordered the release of that bishop.

II. — RAVAGES OF THE BARBARIANS IN THE EMPIRE; VALERIAN; PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS (251-260).

IN the critical position where the army stood after the defeat and death of Decius, it had neither time nor disposition to await



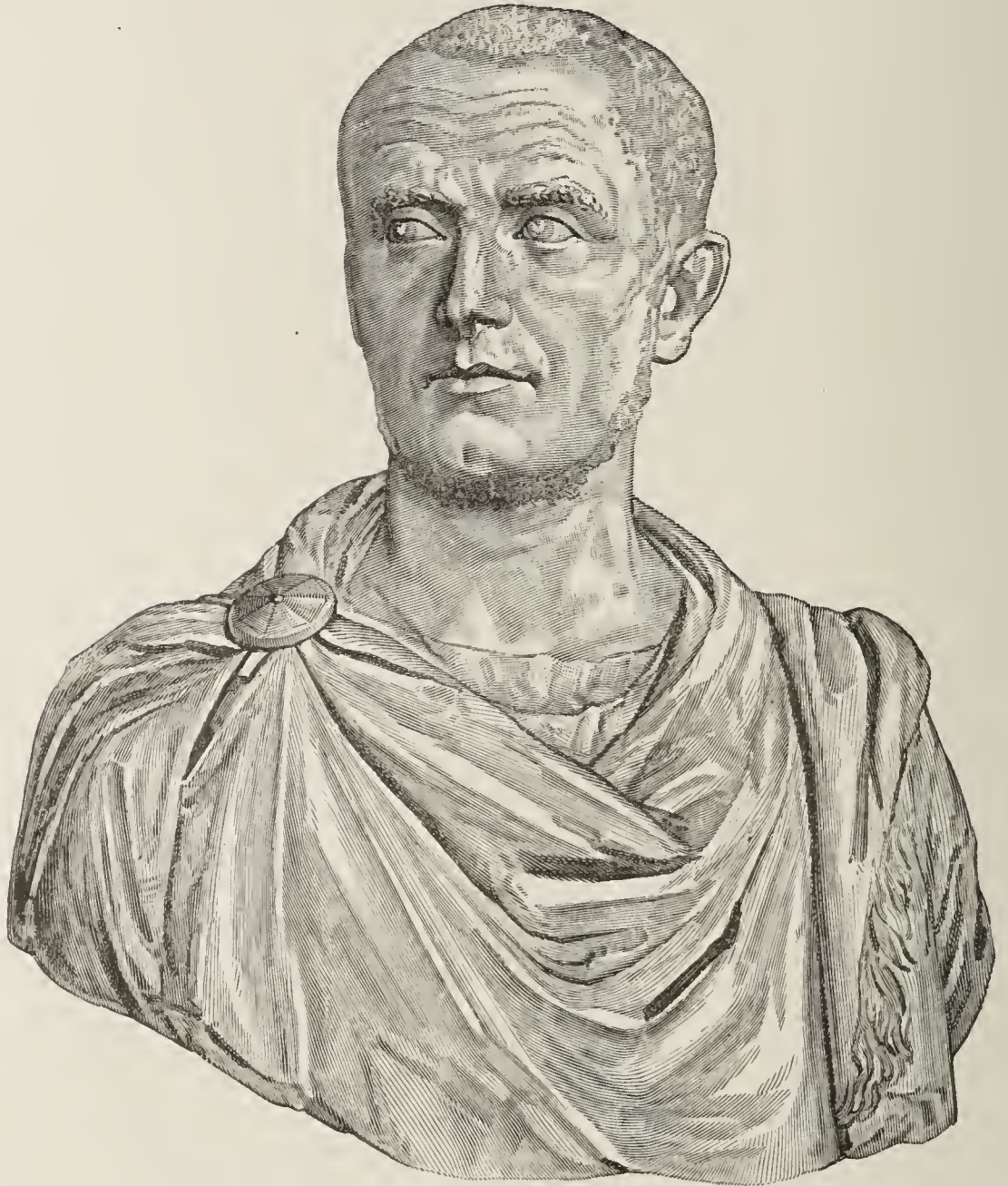
C. VIBIUS TREBONIANUS GALLUS.¹

a decision of the Senate. Gallus easily obtained the purple from his legions.² In order to free himself from the suspicion of having

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 73.

² C. Vibius Trebonianus Gallus, born in 206 according to Aur. Victor, and in 194 according to the *Alexandrian Chronicle*. He was perhaps an African, a native of the Island of Meninx.

betrayed his Emperor, he took for colleague Hostilianus, the second son of Decius, and he caused his own son Volusianus, whom he made Caesar,¹ to marry a daughter of the late Emperor. Not long after, however, Hostilianus died, or was killed. A disgraceful



VOLUSIANUS, SON OF TREBONIANUS GALLUS.²

treaty had permitted the Goths to recross the Danube unmolested, taking with them their booty and their captives, and the promise of an annual subsidy in gold. But they had found the Empire so rich, and at the same time so feeble, that it was to be expected that they would soon return. There was, in fact, talk of new

¹ Eckhel, vii. 365. After the death of Hostilianus, his brother-in-law was made Augustus (*ibid.* 566), and reigned from November, 251, to February, 254.

² Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors.

encounters in Pannonia, which the governor, Aemilianus, a Mauretanian, was able to turn to his own advantage. These slight successes encouraged his troops, whose military pride had been wounded by the treaty of Gallus with the Goths. The distribution among the soldiers of the money sent to pay the Gothic tribute won them completely, and the troops proclaimed their general.¹ Pestilence and famine desolated the provinces, without interrupting the effeminate life Gallus was leading at Rome, and the people



HOSTILIANUS,
SECOND SON OF DECIUS.²



VOLUSIANUS,
SON OF GALLUS.³



TREBONIANUS GALLUS.⁴

held him responsible for these disasters. Aemilianus penetrated unopposed into Italy,⁵ as far as the city of Terni, where he met his opponent. A promise of money to the troops of Gallus decided the defection. The Emperor was killed with his son (February, 254), and the victor had a few days of royalty.

This vain person⁶ promised the Senate to renew the glory of the great reigns, to leave to the Conscrip Fathers the administration of the state, while he himself, undertaking the hardships of war, would go and drive out the Barbarians from the northern and eastern portions of the Empire; and he allowed himself at once to be represented on medals with the attributes of Hercules the Victorious, and Mars the Avenger.

Even before the death of Gallus, Valerian, whom this Emperor had employed to bring to his succor the legions of Gaul and

¹ About the close of August, 253 (Eckhel, vii. 371).

² C[aius] VALENS HOTIL[ianus] (*sic*) MES[ius] QVINTVS N[obilis] C[ae]sar. (Large bronze.)

³ Volusianus, son of Gallus, wearing a radiate crown (aureus). IMP[er]ator CAE[sar] C[aius] VIB[ius] VOLVSIANO[s] (*sic*) AVG[ustus]. (Gold coin.)

⁴ Trebonianus Gallus, laurel crowned. (Bronze medallion.)

⁵ About the end of 253. In this case of difficult chronology we follow Eckhel, who has learnedly discussed the grounds for it.

⁶ M. Aemilius Aemilianus (Or.-Henzen, No. 5,542).

Germany, had been by them (253) decorated with the purple in Rhaetia. Rome had, therefore, three Emperors at once. The disaster of Terni removed one of these. Valerian had no need to fight against the other. The soldiers of his opponent, feeling themselves the weaker party, and possibly offended at the advances made by their Emperor to the Senate, sent to the new Augustus the head of Aemilianus. The unfortunate man had been murdered near Spoletum, after a reign of not quite three months.¹

SILVER COIN.²

We find in this year a prefect of Rome who had the title of *comes domesticorum*, — a new designation, and destined to be very conspicuous. Already we have seen *duces* and *praesidentes*; at the great council of war held in Byzantium in 258 the Emperor will be surrounded by them. Also the *amicus principis* (the Emperor's counsellor) becomes a functionary, — one, Clarus, was made prefect of Illyria and the Gallic provinces;

LARGE BRONZE.³

and during the reign now beginning, there were, so to speak, two empires, — that of the East, where Valerian was waging war, and that of the West, over which his son Gallienus ruled as Augustus. The elements of the approaching reform were in preparation.

We are about to enter upon the period known in history as that of the Thirty Tyrants; that is to say, a time of the most horrible confusion. We shall pass quickly over it, as in some dangerous or malarial locality the traveller hastens his steps.

The disorder existing in the state appears in the narratives which describe it. Even the chronology is uncertain, for the reason that the Emperors succeed one another too quickly for each to have time to issue the coins which fix our dates. The one thing plainly visible is that the whole Barbarian world fell upon the Empire: the Franks overran Gaul; the Alemanni crossed the Rhine; the Goths or the Scythians the Danube and the Euxine; the Persians the Tigris and the Euphrates.

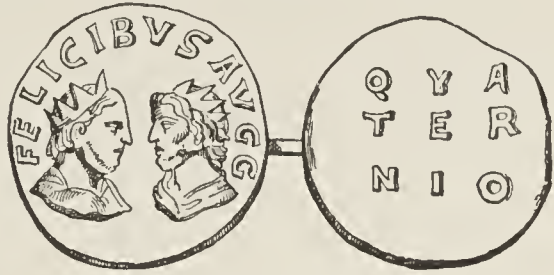
Valerian was an upright man, who had with good reason been

¹ Eutropius says that he was killed *tertio mense*.

² Aemilianus as Mars. MARTI PROPVG[na]T[ori].

³ Laurelled head of Valerian. IMP. C. P. LIC. VALERIANVS AVG.

made the censor of others, because he had always been his own censor,—a man very well worthy of the second rank, but not of the first.¹ He endeavored to relieve the public distress; he listened willingly to advice, and advanced men of worth. Claudius, Aureolus, Postumus, Ingenuus, Aurelian, were all distinguished by him, and Probus owed to this Emperor his first honors.³ But the conduct of affairs required at a period of such

QUATERNIO OF COPPER ALLOY.²SILVER MEDALLION.⁵

extreme disorder something more than good intentions; there was needed good judgment, mental activity, clear and active mind, firmness, and perseverance,—none of which qualities Valerian possessed. Moreover, he came to power too late; old age is the time for repose, and not for duties which require energy both of mind and body.⁴

To oppose Gallus, Aemilianus had brought into Italy the best troops from Pannonia, while to assist him Valerian had led thither the flower of the Rhenish legions. The Barbarians, who had not failed to observe this weakening of the garrisons of the frontier, attempted a new assault. Valerian had the wisdom to see that alone he could not possibly repel so many attacks. Instead, however, of taking as his colleague one of the many valiant and experienced generals at this time in the Roman army, he chose his son Gallienus, who was too young to possess authority and too effeminate to employ it well if he had had it.⁶ Father and son divided the defence. Valerian undertook the East, Gallienus the West (255); we shall see that both were incapable at their imperial trade.

Gallienus was still entirely devoted to pleasure, and passed

¹ P. Licinius Valerianus was of an old family, and at this time sixty-three years of age. He had held office as tribune for the first time while Gallus was yet living, in the year 253.

² Valerian and his son Gallienus, each wearing a radiate crown.

³ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 20; Vopiscus, *Aur.* 8, 9, 11-15; *Prob.* 3-5.

⁴ Zosimus is very severe upon Valerian (i. 36).

⁵ Reverse of a silver medallion, with the legend: VIRTUS GALLIE[ni]. Gallienus on horseback, treading down an enemy.

⁶ All the coins of Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus give him the title of Augustus, not one that of Caesar.

his time in amusements of all kinds.¹ His father had but little confidence in this boy,² and yet dared not give him as counsellor and guide Aurelian, whose severity seemed too great for the time, and especially too great to be endured by Gallienus. Valerian therefore placed the young man in charge of Postumus, a skilful



THE STRAITS OF HERCULES.

soldier, — appointing the latter *dux* of the Rhenish frontier and governor of Gaul. Although the Romans still possessed their strongholds along the Rhine, the Frankish marauders always found along the extensive frontier some ill-guarded point through which their bands could slip into the province.

When they had once crossed the line of the *castra*,³ there were before them only disarmed populations filled with terror at the sight of these yellow-haired warriors whose weapons never missed their mark; and the invaders went on across rivers and over mountains, for the pleasure of seeing, of slaying, and of setting villas and cities on fire. The Pyrenees did not arrest them, nor the Straits of Hercules; and the affrighted Moors beheld these sons of another world, whose destructive instincts the Vandals would later reveal to them. Among the Spanish towns pillaged or destroyed by the Franks, Eusebius names the great city of Tarragona,⁴ in which a century and a half did not suffice to efface the traces of this devastation. Ilerda, in the time of Ausonius, was only a heap of ruins;⁵ and in the fifth century Orosius speaks of

¹ Never had entertainments been more numerous than in the reign of Valerian and Gallienus (Eckhel, iv. 422).

² *Puer*. The word is in a letter quoted by Vopiscus (*Aur.* 9), of which the authenticity has been called in question, though upon insufficient grounds. It is true that Aurelius Victor makes Gallienus thirty-five years of age at the time of his accession to the Empire.

³ They seem to have come into Gaul by the valley of the Moselle, where have been found many coins of this period, which doubtless were buried at their approach.

⁴ Eusebius places the taking of Tarragona by the Franks in the year 263. According to Orosius (vii. 22) they remained a dozen years in Spain (256–268).

⁵ At the end of the fourth century (*Ep.* xxv. 5, 3).

many Spanish cities laid waste. If, as we have already said in relating the reign of Augustus, the Empire had been able to give the provincial assemblies a permanent existence, and the municipal militia of the first century¹ had endured until the third, Spain could easily have repelled this handful of invaders. It was the isolation of the cities which prevented them from organizing for the common defence.

Gallienus cared little for these disasters; the sun of Spain and of Africa, and civilization, whose contact is deadly to Barbarians when they are not strong enough to destroy it, were sure, he thought, soon to get the better of these bold marauders. He contented himself with detaining the bulk of the nation on the Rhine by many small encounters and finally by the means so often employed, — that of buying over a Barbarian chief to guard the frontiers for him; after which he assumed the name of Germanicus and caused himself to be represented on coins as the conqueror of two rivers, the Mein and the Rhine, of which the one protected Gaul against the Germans, and the other opened Germany to a Roman invasion.³ Aurelian distinguished himself in these severe campaigns. He destroyed a Frankish corps near Mayence, and three lines of a song of his soldiers have been preserved, —



COIN OF COPPER
ALLOY.²

Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille decollavimus.

Mille Sarmatas, mille Francos occidimus,

Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille Persas quaerimus.⁴

In 258 an insurrection of the legions of Pannonia called Gallienus into that province; it had hardly been repressed when the Alemanni, not finding it possible to get through into Gaul, where the frontier was well guarded by Postumus, threw themselves upon Italy, and advanced as far as Ravenna. In the time of Aurelian they made it their boast that forty thousand Alemannic cavalry had

¹ Vol. IV. chap. lxvii.

² Gallienus conquering the Mein and the Rhine.

³ Eckhel, vii. 385, 390–91. Postumus issued similar coins (*Ibid.* 447).

⁴ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 6. The date of this event is uncertain. Tillemont places it too early, — in 242; for Valerian's letter to the urban prefect (*Ibid.* 9), in which the Emperor calls him *liberator Illyrici, Galliarum restitutor*, and makes allusion to the important services which had lately brought Aurelian into notice, was written in 257.

watered their horses at the river Po, and had ravaged a large part of the peninsula.¹ It was the first time since the Cimbric invasion that



GOLD MEDALLION.²

the Germans touched, otherwise than as captives, the sacred soil of old Italy. The Alps, then, were no longer an insurmountable barrier, and the fear of the Gallic "tumults," which four victorious centuries had dispelled, broke out afresh. Rome was in alarm. In the absence of the Emperors, the Senate levied troops and armed the citizens: it was the first worthy act done by them for many years. The Allemanni, doubtless less numerous³ than they afterwards represented themselves to be, and already laden with booty, made a disorderly retreat towards the Alps. Gallienus had time to arrive from Pannonia, and he defeated some detachments near Milan (258 or 259). In the hope of preventing the return of similar incursions, he employed upon the Danube the policy which had seemed to succeed upon the Rhine,—that of alliances bought by gifts or honors; he married the daughter of a king of the Marcomanni, Pipa by name, and seated her beside the Empress Cornelia Salonina. The fair-haired German became the Emperor's favorite, and supreme in the palace, where Salonina consoled herself with empty honors and the study of philosophy under the leader of the new Alexandrian school.⁵



COIN OF COPPER ALLOY.⁴

¹ Dexippos, *Excerpta de Legat.*, in the *Scriptores Historiae Byzantinae*; Orosius, vii. 22.

² P. M. TR. P. VIII. COS. IIII. P. P. The Emperor, wearing the praetexta, holding a wand in the left hand and a patera in the right, sacrifices at a lighted altar. Cf. Mowat, *Trésor de Monaco*, p. 9. This medallion is regarded with great doubt by M. Muret on account of the contradiction between COS. IIII. on the reverse and COS. V. on the face. Reverse of a gold medallion of Gallienus found at Monaco in 1879.

³ Zonaras says three hundred thousand; but he adds that Gallienus defeated them with ten thousand men.

⁴ The Empress Salonina, seated, holding a sceptre and an olive-branch. Reverse of a coin of Salonina, with the legend: AVG. IN PACE.

⁵ Pipa, notwithstanding the affection of Gallienus, remained only a concubine. There is neither medal nor inscription bearing her name, while Salonina is always called Augusta. On the coins of Gallienus are seen the heads of the husband and wife. There exists a coin of Salonina with the Christian legend, *in pace*. I do not, however, believe that Salonina resolutely entered the Church, where she would not have been received without a conspicuous repudiation of heathen rites; and the Empress who built a temple to Segetia, the goddess of Harvests, certainly never made that abjuration. But inquisitive in respect to the ideas current in her time, and troubled by the disasters of the Empire and her own domestic unhappiness, doubtless the friend of Plotinus aspired to the peace which Christianity and

Without doubt an important law of Gallienus is due to the invasion of the Alemanni. The warlike zeal lately shown by the Senate disturbed him. A rescript prohibited to the Conscript Fathers military service, and they were forbidden to appear in an army or in a camp.¹ In the preceding chapter we have seen the results of this decision.

The Marcomanni and the Goths, with their allies the Carpae, the Boranae, and the Burgundii, caused Illyria, Macedonia, Thrace, and Greece to suffer the woes that the Franks had inflicted upon Gaul, and the Alemanni, upon Italy. All these provinces were desolated by devastations, murders, and a multitude of small engagements, of which we know neither the place nor the date, but in which



THE EMPRESS SALONINA.²

the generals gained reputation and the selfish affection of a few soldiers, and later the dangerous honor of being by them elected to the Empire, — a formidable favor, which was equivalent to a death-sentence with short reprieve. One of these generals, Aurelian, was to keep the purple for five years, and to be a great ruler.³ In a letter of 257 to the urban prefect, Valerian calls him

the neo-Platonists promised after death. Her husband, who promulgated the first edict of toleration in favor of the Christians, is believed to have done this from consideration for the Empress, who, it is thought, inclined him to benevolence towards the adherents of the new faith. See M. de Witte's *Mémoire sur l'impératrice Salonine*, 1852.

¹ Aur. Victor, 33; cf. *id.* 27. From that time forward the *praefectus legionis* took the place of legionary legate.

² Museum of the Capitol.

³ Another, Valens, who was to be Emperor for a very brief time, appears to have com-

the liberator of Illyria, and says that he had cleared this province of Barbarians. For their food these hordes drove along an immense number of cattle; Aurelian took so many from them that he was able to distribute among several Thracian towns a great number of oxen and horses. He even sent to Rome, for one of Valerian's



ROMAN AUXILIARY ON HORSEBACK, KILLING AN ENEMY.¹

villas, five hundred choice slaves, two thousand cows, two thousand mares, ten thousand sheep, and fifteen thousand goats.²

The circle of barbarism which enveloped the Empire was now closing in on every side, and Asia, as well as Europe, had its invasions.

The garrisons of the Roman posts, established, as we have seen, along the southern shores of the Euxine as far as Sebastopolis,³ at the foot of the Caucasus, had been reduced, in order to furnish soldiers for the continual revolutions of the Empire; and seditions which the Antonines would have prevented placed the kingdom

pelled the Gauls to raise the siege of Thessalonica. At least, in Amm. Marcellinus (xxi. 16), he has the surname of Thessalonicus.

¹ Monument found near Mayence (Lindenschmit, *op. cit.* pl. vii. No. 3).

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 10.

³ See Vol. V. pp. 25 *et seq.*

of the Bosphorus at the mercy of its new neighbors.¹ The Cimmerians gave up their vessels to the Goths, the Alans, and the Heruli; and these extemporized pirates were carried by the sailors of the Bosphorus “across the inhospitable sea” as far as the



CIMMERIAN BOSPHORUS: JEWELS FOUND IN THE TOMB OF A PRIESTESS OF CYBELE.²

Asiatic coasts. They seized upon Pityus, and then upon the great city of Trebizond, where three centuries of prosperity had heaped up immense wealth, which a numerous garrison was not able to protect.³

¹ The kings of the Bosphorus put on their coins the effigy of the reigning emperor. Decius, Gallus, Volusianus, Hostilianus, Aemilianus, Gallienus, Odenathus, Probus, and so on. Cf. Eckhel, iii. 306, and Cary, *Hist. des rois du Bosph.* pp. 76–78. But these kings were now at the mercy of their Barbarian neighbors. Accordingly, a gap of several years in the coins of Rhascuporis IV. announces the troubles by which a Barbarian usurper, Ininthimevus, profited. Phareanses, who seems to have reigned but a short time about the year 253, has also a name of doubtful aspect. A Rhascuporis VII. reigned from 254 to 266, and probably longer (*Trésor de numism.* p. 63).

² See Vol. III. p. 120, a pendant found in the same tomb.

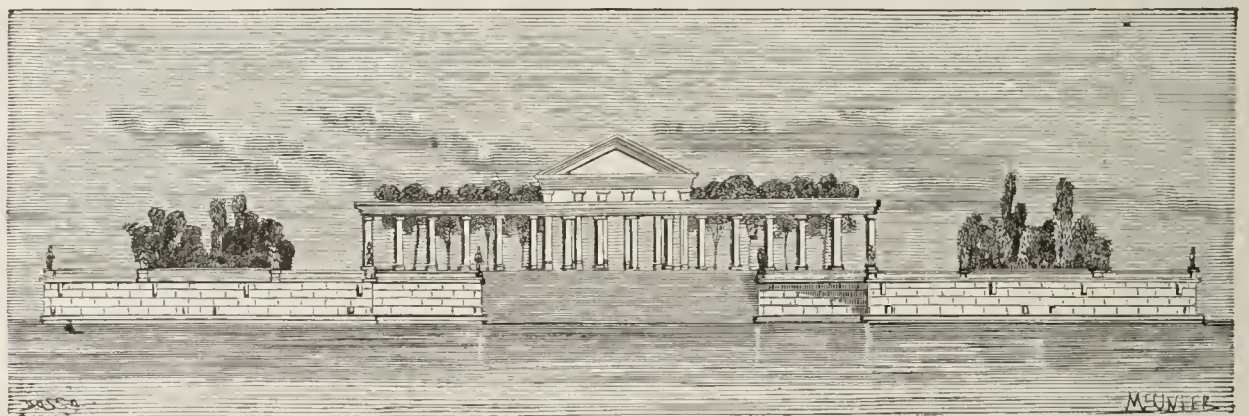
³ There were two expeditions: the first, which failed, probably in 255; the second and successful attempt, in 257 (Zosimus, i. 32, 33).

The rumor of this important capture fired the ardor of the Goths of the Danube. They obliged their Roman prisoners to construct vessels, in which they sailed along the coast, while the main body of the invading army, crossing the river, traversed all Thrace undisturbed, and arriving in the neighborhood of Byzantium, found



ISLAND AND SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, IN THE RHYNDACUS.¹ (PRESENT CONDITION.)

on the shore a great multitude of fishermen, who consented to lend their little boats, — without doubt for the sake of sharing in the plunder. “From Chalcedon to the temple at the entrance of the Thracian Bosphorus,” there were forces more considerable than



ISLAND AND SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, IN THE RHYNDACUS.¹ (RESTORATION BY GUILLAUME.)

those of the Barbarians; but the Romans, seized with terror, fled, and the Goths entered Chalcedon, Nicomedeia, the future capital of Diocletian, Nicaea, Cius, Apameia, Prusa, and Apollonia, which its temple of Apollo did not protect, built upon an island in a beautiful lake formed and traversed by the Rhyndacus. Cyzicus escaped because the invaders could not cross the swollen river.

¹ Lebas and Waddington, *Voy. archéol. en Grèce et en Asie Min.: Architecture*, pl. 1, 2.

All Bithynia was sacked, and the Roman legions nowhere dared to make a stand against the enemy. The people fled in inexpressible alarm, and many of these wretched creatures, among whom we are forced to enumerate some of the Christians, took advantage of this immense disorganization to pillage in their turn (early in the year 258). The poor Jacquerie of France in the Middle Ages, yielding in the presence of similar disasters to a savage despair, said: "The devil is unchained; let us do our worst." Three centuries later, by the ruins they left behind them, the road the Goths traversed could be made out. "They carried back into their country immense booty," says Zosimus, "and they gave great honors to Chrysogonos, who had advised this expedition."¹

The preceding year Valerian had held at Byzantium a great council of war, in presence of the officers of the palace and of the army. We have the order of precedence in this assembly, and give it to show the new dignities that were coming into existence. At the right of the Emperor were seated one of the consuls, the praetorian prefect, and the governor of the East; on his left, the *dux* of the Scythian frontier, the Egyptian prefect, the *dux* of the Oriental frontier, the prefect of the Eastern annona, the *duces* of Illyricum and Thrace, and lastly the *dux* of the Rhaetian border. The foolish chronicler, who had the opportunity to read the report of this session, does not make known to us the serious deliberations which filled it; he contents himself with saying that Valerian decreed on this occasion extraordinary commendation to Aurelian for recent victories in Illyria over Gothic and Sarmatian bands.²

Where was the conqueror of the Franks and Goths at the time of the disasters which have just been described? Doubtless at Antioch with Valerian. This Emperor did nothing to prevent or arrest the misfortunes from which Bithynia suffered. He merely sent a general to Byzantium to guard that important point.

¹ Jordanes (*De Gothorum gestis*, 20) says that the Goths burned Ilium and the temple of Diana at Ephesus; he adds that in his time (the sixth century) there were still to be seen at Chalcedon the ruins that they had caused. Zosimus (i. 35) does not say who this Chrysogonos was; but it is apparent that these Barbarians were not too barbarous to take advantage of traitors, and collect the information necessary to the success of their expeditions.

² Vopiseus, *Aur.* 15. Valerian gave him at this time not the consulship, as Vopiseus says, but the consular ornaments. Inscriptions and coins prove that Aurelian was consul for the first time in 271. (See Eckhel, vii. 479.)

But the Goths had not as yet formed the design of establishing themselves permanently in the Empire, and their retreat was doubtless caused less by the approach of the Emperor, who advanced into Cappadocia, than by the desire to place in safety before the stormy season¹ the booty with which their vessels were loaded, — a



COIN OF VALERIAN.³

booty whose magnitude and value surpassed all their expectations.²

The Gothic inroads were probably connected with another invasion, which seemed likely to drive the Romans out of Asia; namely, that of Sapor. At least we see that the Barbarians made their attack first upon the cities where the roads from Armenia came in, of which country the Persians were taking possession; and in occupying Cappadocia, Valerian seems to have had the design of placing himself between the two allies.

If it be said that this is ascribing to these savage tribes too extensive combinations, we must remember the embassies sent by the Dacians to the Arsacidae in the time of Trajan. The Amales required no great efforts of political intelligence to understand and follow the traditions of the Decebalus.⁴

Sapor had assassinated Chosroes,⁵ the king of Armenia, and had placed one of his own partisans upon the throne. For more than a quarter of a century this country was like a Persian province, — to the great grief of its inhabitants; for the Persians perse-

¹ The ancients were reluctant to venture upon the Euxine earlier than May, or later than September.

² Sozomenes (*Hist. eccl.* ii. 6) and Philostorges (*Hist. eccl.* ii. 5) say that among the captives were priests, who converted multitudes of Barbarians on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube. The work of conversion was possibly beginning among the Goths at this period; in 325 a bishop from this nation sat in the Council of Nicaea: but in Western Germany there were no Christians, before Clovis, among the Franks whom Sozomenus seems to designate, and the conversion of the Alemanni took place later.

³ Reverse of a coin of Valerian, struck at Antioch, in Caria. ANTIOXEON. Bridge over the Meander; underneath, a couchant river and an equestrian statue. (Bronze.)

⁴ Vol. V. p. 238. Pliny arrested in Bithynia an emissary from the Decebalus to Chosroes. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius the powerful league of the Marcomanni was formed, in 165, shortly after the great successes of Vologeses in Armenia and over the Syrian legions.

⁵ Tiridates, the son of Chosroes, was saved by the satraps and sent to Rome, and in 287 Diocletian placed him upon the throne of his fathers (Moses Chorenos, *Hist. Armeniaca*, ii. 69-75).

cuted all those who followed the national customs, destroying all buildings of a sacred character, temples of the Sun and Moon: and the sacred fire of Ormuzd constantly burning upon altars, was a reminder of the triumph of a hostile race and a foreign religion. Thus another bulwark of the Empire, and one of its best defences, was destroyed.

The possession of Armenia by the Persians in fact rendered easy their conquest of Mesopotamia, where Sapor took the fortified towns Nisibis and Carrhae. The situation, therefore, was very threatening, and it was due to those who, in less than forty years, had caused, either directly or indirectly, ten military revolutions.

SAPOR I.¹

The Romans, remaining masters of Edessa, barred to the Persian army one of the roads into Asia Minor; and the Cilician Gates, without doubt well guarded at that time, closed the other. Sapor, with his inefficient infantry,² was not able to force a passage through the mountains, and he could not hinder a Roman army from coming down into Syria; Valerian, indeed, entered Antioch without fighting. The appearance of the Goths in Bithynia obliged him to return into Asia Minor, "where," says Zosimus, "he did nothing save vex the people as he passed through." The retreat of the Barbarians permitted him at last to leave Capadocia and march upon Edessa, which, for many years blockaded, still held out. But his troops had suffered greatly from pestilence; and a defeat which he experienced, together with the clamors of the army, decided him to negotiate. Sapor refusing to receive envoys from the Emperor, the latter requested a personal interview, repeating the error of Crassus. When the astute Barbarian saw the Emperor come to him attended by only a small guard, he caused Valerian to be surrounded by the Persian cavalry and made prisoner (260).³ He lived six years in captivity, enduring

¹ Bust of the king, wearing the diadem and placed on a lion's head surmounted by two wings. Intaglio on sardonyx (20 millim. by 18). (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,347.)

² In respect to the Persian infantry, see Amm. Marcellinus, xxiii. 6.

³ This is the account given by Zosimus (i. 3). Zonaras speaks of a battle and a defeat. He adds that there was a tradition of a mutiny in the Roman army which had caused Valerian to seek refuge with Sapor, *πρὸς τὸν Σαπῶρην κατέφυγεν*.

shameful ill-treatment; and after his death,¹ his skin, tanned, stuffed, and colored red, was hung from the roof of the most important temple in Persia, where it remained for several centuries.² The rocks of Nakeh-Roustem and of Schahpûr retained the story of this great Roman humiliation; and the horsemen there seen treading legionaries under their horses' feet, perhaps gave rise to the legend that Sapor used the Roman Emperor as a horse-block to mount by.³

The Persian king took advantage of the consternation which this event caused in the Roman army to endeavor to seize the Empire as well as the Emperor. Guided by the traitor Cyriades, he penetrated into Syria. One day, as the inhabitants of Antioch were witnessing a performance in the theatre, one of them cried out suddenly: "I am dreaming, or else the Persians are upon us!" A few moments later, arrows began to fall amongst the crowd, and the city was pitilessly sacked.⁴ Terror again seized upon all these provinces. It was asserted that Emesa had been saved by its divinity.⁵ Probably the great mass of the Persian forces was in the northern part of the province, and only a detachment, easily to be resisted, was sent to the holy city; or else Sapor, through policy, respected a temple venerated by all the nations in this region.

All the attention of the Persians was now turned towards Asia Minor; that being conquered, the rest would fall. They traversed unopposed the passes of Cilicia, took the great city of Tarsus, and besieged Caesarea, the capital of Cappadocia, which is believed to have had at this time a population of four hundred

¹ Agathias even says that he was flayed alive.

² What is legend, and what is truth in this story? It is not easy to say. A letter from Constantine to Sapor II., quoted by Eusebius (*Life of Const.* iv. 11), and the words of Galerius to Narses, related by Peter Patricius (*Excerpta de Legat.* in the *Collectanea* of Const. VII), attest that Valerian certainly suffered the most humiliating of captivities; it lasted, according to the *Chronicle of Alexandria*, until 269. But Treb. Pollio (*Tyr. trig.* 14) places the death of Valerian before that of Odenathus, consequently in 266: . . . *Irutum fuisse reipublicae Deum credo, qui, interfecto Valeriano, noluit Odenatum reservari.*

³ The bas-relief of Darabgerd shows Sapor treading under his horse's feet a prostrate man, on whose head seems to be a fragment of a laurel-wreath (Flandin, *Perse ancienne*, pl. xxxiii.). But this was a symbol of victory much in use among the Persians, and we are not to conclude that this sculpture represents a real action.

⁴ Amm. Marcellinus (xxiii. 5) places this in the reign of Gallienus; that is, after the captivity of Valerian.

⁵ John Malalas.

thousand inhabitants. The city held out for a long time, until a prisoner, being put to the torture, revealed a weak point in the defences, through which the besiegers by night entered the place. They had been ordered to seize the brave Demosthenes, who had directed the defence; but he cut his way through on horseback, killing many of the enemy, and made his escape.¹ Two years earlier than this the Persians would have been able from Cappadocia to reach the Goths, masters of Bithynia. But the Barbarians of the South did not need aid from the Barbarians of the North to reach the Propontis and the Sea of the Cyclades. Terror went before them. "They might easily," says Zosimus, "have made themselves masters of the whole of Asia, if they had not been in haste to enjoy their victory at home and to carry off their booty."² After their departure the Syrians took revenge upon the traitor Cyriades,³ who had assumed the title of Augustus, and burned him alive.

It is said that when Sapor announced his victory to all the neighboring or allied nations, the latter, terrified at this great triumph, concealed their fears under the counsels of philosophic moderation which they sent back in reply.⁴ The son of Valerian, however, had no need of the consolations of wisdom to appease a grief which he did not feel. "I knew," he said, "that my father was mortal; besides, he has fallen like a brave man;" and considering him as already dead, Gallienus apotheosized him. Possibly these words might have been pardoned to a son who had followed them by energetic acts to avenge his father and the Empire; but this affectation of stoicism was only unfilial cowardice.

The reign of Valerian is marked by the most cruel persecution that the Church had yet endured. When the pagan inhabitants of the Empire beheld Barbarians threatening the very heart of Italy and ravaging two thirds of the provinces, their anger was turned—as often before in cases of public calamity—against this foreign people living among them, indifferent to their griefs, and refusing to take arms against the common enemy. As if entering reluctantly

¹ Zonaras, xii. 23.

² Amm. Marcellinus (xxiii. 5) also speaks of this precipitate departure.

³ Or Mariades. Cf. *Fragm. hist. Graec.* v. 192 (Didot).

⁴ These letters must be fabrications, however, for the Persian archives certainly were not open to the writers of the *Augustan History*.

upon the career of persecution, the Emperors in their first letters simply forbade assemblages of Christians, and denied them access to their cemeteries; no one was required to renounce the worship of Christ, but all were ordered to conform to the Roman cult, — which was, however, equivalent to apostasy; and, finally, the contumacious were as yet punished with exile only. The acts of Cyprian exhibit this first phase of persecution, which does not seem to have struck outside of the clergy.

“In the fourth consulship of the Emperor Valerianus and the third of Gallienus, the third day before the kalends of September” (30th August, 257), “in the audience-hall at Carthage, the proconsul Paternus said to the Bishop Cyprian: ‘The most sacred Emperors Valerianus and Gallienus have deigned to address letters to me, in which they order all persons not professing the Roman religion to observe without delay all its ceremonies. I have therefore summoned you to ascertain your intentions. What answer have you to make?’ The Bishop Cyprian replied: ‘I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no other god than the one true God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is. This God we Christians serve, to Him we pray night and day, for ourselves and for all men, and especially for the safety of the Emperors.’ The proconsul said: ‘Do you persist in this resolution?’ The Bishop Cyprian replied: ‘The goodwill that has once known God never changes.’ The proconsul Paternus said: ‘You may prepare, then, to go into exile in the city of Curubis: so Valerianus and Gallienus command.’ The Bishop Cyprian replied: ‘I am ready to go.’ The proconsul Paternus said: ‘The orders which I have received concern not only bishops, but also priests. I wish, therefore, to know the names of the priests dwelling in this city.’ The Bishop Cyprian replied: ‘Well and wisely have your laws prohibited giving information; I, therefore, cannot make known to you or give up to you those of whom you speak; you will find them in the cities where they dwell.’ The proconsul Paternus said: ‘It is my will that they appear before me to-day in this place.’ Cyprian answered: ‘The rules of our order forbid them to surrender themselves, and in this you cannot blame their conduct; but seek for them, and you will find them.’ The proconsul Paternus said: ‘Fear not; I will find them.’ And he



VALERIAN PROSTRATE BEFORE SAPOR, WHO IS ON HORSEBACK. BAS-RELIEF OF NAKHEH-ROUSTEM, UNDER THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS
(ENVIRONS OF PERSEPOLIS). FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY M. DIEULAFOY.

The Library
of the
University of Illinois

added: 'The Emperors also forbid meetings in any place whatsoever, and the entering of cemeteries. Whoever shall violate



GALLIENUS.¹

this wise prohibition will be punished with death.' The Bishop Cyprian: 'Do whatever is commanded you.'"²

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 76.

² Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, pp. 477, 478, from the proconsular reports of the martyrdom of Saint Cyprian. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, suffered no other penalty than exile into the Libyan desert, three days' journey from Paraetionium (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 11). Interrogated by the prefect of Egypt, he had made Saint Paul's famous reply (Acts v. 29), which Polycrates of Ephesus had also repeated (*Hist. eccl.* v. 24), — a reply by which the social bond may at any time be broken: "We must obey God rather than men;" that is to say, a man's own ideas, which

The successor of Paternus removed the sentence of exile decreed against Cyprian, and suffered him to reside outside the gates of Carthage in a house which belonged to the bishop. But the calamities of the Empire increased. Emperors who could not defend themselves, believed that they might obtain the assistance of Heaven by avenging their gods. In the middle of the year 258 Valerian sent to the Senate the following rescript:—

“Bishops, priests, and deacons shall be punished with death; senators, officers, and knights degraded and deprived of their goods. If they persist, death. Women of honorable birth shall be banished. Freedmen of the palace shall be sent as slaves to the Emperor’s domains.”¹

We will further give the last examination of Saint Cyprian, showing the general method of procedure against the martyrs.

“The proconsul Galerius Maximus said to Cyprian: ‘You are Thascius Cyprianus?’ The bishop answered: ‘I am.’ The proconsul said: ‘You are the bishop of these sacrilegious persons?’ ‘I am.’ ‘The most sacred Emperors have ordered you to sacrifice to the gods.’ ‘I shall not do so.’ ‘Reflect upon your conduct.’ ‘Do what you are ordered; in a thing so right, I have no occasion to deliberate.’ Galerius Maximus, after taking the advice of his council, expressed himself as follows: ‘You have long held sacrilegious opinions; you have brought many men into this impious conspiracy, thus placing yourselves in hostility towards the gods of Rome and the laws of religion; and the pious and most sacred Emperors Valerianus and Gallienus, Augusti, and the very illustrious Valerianus Caesar, have not been able to bring you back to the observance of their religious ceremonies. For this reason you, being the author of the most infamous crimes, and the standard-bearer of the sect, shall serve as an example to those whom you have led astray by your criminal machinations; your blood shall pay the penalty of the law.’ Having said this, he took his tablets and wrote the sentence which he had uttered aloud: ‘We condemn Thascius Cyprianus to be beheaded.’ The

he believes to come from divine revelation or inspiration, rather than the law of the land. In the case of the Christians, the state was in the wrong, and their resistance was legitimate; but the formula is dangerous, for it will not always be employed in protecting the rights which ought to be protected, — namely, those of conscience.

¹ Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 82, *ad Successum*. The edict of Valerian is given there.

bishop said: 'God be praised!'"¹ The guards then led him away. Arriving at the place of execution, Cyprian took off his outer garment, knelt, and prayed some time. Then he gave his dalmatic to the deacons, himself bandaged his eyes, and directed his followers after his death to give to the executioner twenty-five gold pieces. The brethren held strips of cloth around him to collect the martyr's blood. The executioner trembled when he struck the



POPE SIXTUS AND THE DEACON LAWRENCE, ON A GILDED GLASS
FROM THE CATACOMBS.²

mortal blow. All the pagans must have trembled also when they witnessed these triumphant deaths (14th September, 258).

Cyprian was among the favored ones: his was the easiest death; others were burned alive, like the Bishop of Tarragona, or thrown to the wild beasts. Rome paid largely the debt of blood. Pope Sixtus II. was one of the first to perish. Being surprised in the catacombs while celebrating the holy mysteries, he was beheaded; and his deacon, Saint Lawrence, was burned at a slow fire. Wherever Christian communities had been established, many priests,

¹ Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, pp. 490–491, from the proconsular reports.

² Roller, *op. cit.* pl. lxxvii. No. 2. Upon the legend, PIE Z ESES, see Vol. VI. p. 588, n. 2

deacons, believers, and even women, perished. Novatian, who brought into the Church all the severity of his earlier master, the Stoic Zeno, was one of the victims, and possibly also Saint Dionysius, who evangelized the North of Gaul, and Polyeuctes, whom Corneille has made famous.¹

The Empire was rending itself with its own hands — as if famine, pestilence, and the Barbarians, who seemed to the Christians “to be let loose by God for this day of wrath,”² were not enough for its destruction!

Gallienus had one merit, — he understood that this persecution was unjust as well as useless; and as soon as he was sole master he ordered that their cemeteries, their possessions, and the freedom of their worship should be restored to the Christians (260).³ Thus there was one war the less in the Empire. Unhappily, many others still remained.

At the time when the imprudence of Valerian had given Syria over to the Persians there were in the East two men famous for their military talent, — Macrianus, the principal lieutenant of the captive Emperor, and Balista, who had formerly held the office of praetorian prefect. They collected the remnant of the army of Edessa, and sought at Samosata, in the narrow angle formed by Mount Amanus and the Euphrates, a place of refuge which it would be easy to defend.⁴ By slow degrees courage returned to the Romans. Balista reached the coasts of the Sea of Cyprus, collected a flotilla on which he embarked a few soldiers, and made successful descents here and there in Cilicia. As the Persians, in the pride of their victory, disdained all prudence, he frequently surprised their detachments, and killed many men.

But the best assistance came from a side whence the Empire expected nothing. We have frequently spoken in this History of Palmyra, its riches, its numerous population, and of a family of

¹ For details of this persecution, see Tillemont, iii. 415–440. The *Acts* of the martyrdom of Saint Dionysius, compiled in the seventh or eighth century, are not authentic.

² Orosius, vii. 22.

³ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 13. Gallienus seems to have been a man of gentle temper. A dealer having sold imitated gems to the Empress Salonina, he condemned him to be eaten by a lion, and then let loose against him a capon. Everybody laughed, and the Emperor cried: “We have deceived the deceiver!” (*Hist. Aug. Gall.* 12.)

⁴ *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 193 (Didot).

high rank there, the Odainath, or Odenathi.¹ The Palmyrenes, for their commerce, had need of the friendship of Sapor. They sent him ambassadors with rich presents to solicit his goodwill. The king threw the gifts into the river, tore up the letter that the envoys had given him, and demanded an absolute submission.² Palmyra had at this time as chief or prince of its senate an able and determined man, very rich and very influential, Septimius Odenathus. In critical periods men of distinguished ability naturally take their place. Odenathus persuaded his countrymen that there was no answer but war to insults which were a distinct threat against their independence, and he set on foot preparations for it in a suitable manner. The caravans had made Palmyra's fortune. To guide them, the city had been obliged to employ the Arabs of the Syrian desert, who all, from the Orontes to the Pasitigris, were in her interests. Odenathus reminded their sheiks of the destruction of Atrra, the Arab city, by Sapor; he convinced them that their liberty and their wealth would be lost if the haughty king should drive the Romans out of Asia. The Arabs of the present day have two passions, — religion and traffic. Mahomet had not yet given his fellow-countrymen the former, but the latter passion had been extraordinarily fostered by the profits which the interchange of commodities between the two empires left in the hands of the carriers. They gathered in crowds around the "prince of Palmyra," and we shall see them establish an Arab empire for the first time.

ODENATHUS.³

Palmyra had a permanent Roman garrison, and this detachment served as a nucleus for the new army. The Roman fugitives scattered throughout Syria rallied about it, and Odenathus added his Arabs. The successes of Balista had endangered the situation of the Persians in Syria: their line of retreat was threatened on the south by the warlike preparations of Palmyra, and on the north

¹ Vol. V. p. 373, and Vol. VI. pp. 518 *et seq.* In April, 258, Odenathus had already received the consular ornaments (Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, No. 2,602).

² Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de Legat.* 2.

³ Odenathus, husband of Zenobia (uncertain). Engraved stone in the *Cabinet de France* (15 millim. by 13), No. 1,399.

by the garrison of Edessa, which the troops from Samosata had probably joined at this time; and upon this too Roman soil they began to



SILVER VASE.³

be uneasy. Sapor led his troops back towards the Euphrates, leaving many of them behind him, surprised by a sudden attack of Odenathus. Arriving on the right bank of the river, the Persians congratulated one another, believing they were safe; but they were still obliged, says Zonaras, to buy their passage by giving up to the army of Edessa all that was left to them of Syrian gold.¹ In these deserts whirlwinds of men appeared. Drawn by the lure of carnage and booty, the nomads rushed thither from all quarters of the horizon, and powerful armies emerged from the waste. Odenathus, just now joined by Balista, found himself strong enough to undertake the conquest of Mesopotamia and to venture on following, as far as Ctesiphon itself, the track of Trajan and Septimius Severus.² In a battle he captured part of the treasures and some of the wives of Sapor. This

was the sharp reply of the Palmyrenes to the Great King.

Odenathus had not been able to set Valerian at liberty, but he sent captive satraps to Rome; and Gallienus, forgetting his father, celebrated with a triumph the victory which the legions had left the Bedouins to gain.

From this expedition Odenathus returned too great to remain

¹ Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de Legat.* 10.

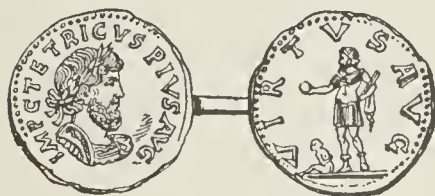
² Eutropius, ix. 10, 11; Malalas, xii. 227; Zonaras, xii. 23.

³ *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,880. This monument of Persian art under the Sassanidae is ornamented with two groups of lions, separated by the sacred tree *Hom*. The figures are in *repoussé* on a gold ground. This vase had a handle, which is now missing. Cf. Chabouillet, *op. cit.* p. 467, and Lenormant, in vol. iii. of the *Musée d'archéol.* of Fathers Martin and Cahier.

longer a private individual. The Arabs proclaimed him king; and Gallienus, to attach to himself so useful a servant, appointed him chief of the imperial forces in that part of the East, — *αὐτοκράτων*. or *imperator* (beginning of 262). Later, after further services, he gave Odenathus the title of Augustus; and the son of the clients of Severus took rank among the Emperors of Rome.¹

III. — THE PROVINCIAL EMPERORS (249–268); GALLIENUS.

THOSE who have been called, in imitation of Athens, the Thirty Tyrants, were neither thirty in number, nor were they tyrants. From the captivity of Valerian to the death of his son, we count eighteen generals who were proclaimed emperor² by their troops, as had been all since the Antonines; and they lacked only success to take their place legally among the masters of the Roman world. One only, Calpurnius Piso, was of the highest rank;⁴ another, Tetricus, of senatorial dignity; the rest were of obscure origin. Moreover, these so-called usurpers were neither worse nor better than the Emperors whose names are in the official list: many manifested ability and did service; all of them were as legitimate as was Septimius Severus. The Empire — that is to say, a union for common defence — seemed no longer to exist, since one of the Emperors was captive in Ctesiphon, and the other



COIN OF TETRICUS.³

¹ M. de Vogüé (*Inscr. sév.* pp. 29 et seq.) does not believe that Odenathus ever had the title of Augustus. But, as M. Waddington remarks (*Inscr. de Syrie*, p. 601), "at Palmyra it was not of particular importance to translate exactly the names of Roman dignities," and as Zenobia is called in an inscription Σεβαστή, or *Augusta*, it would appear that this title was given her as widow of a Σεβαστός.

² We shall have twenty-nine Caesars or Augusti murdered in less than twelve years if we include sons of Emperors to whom their fathers gave the purple.

³ IMP. C. TETRICVS PIVS AVG. and the laurelled head of the Emperor. On the reverse: VIRTVS AVG.; Tetricus, in a military costume, standing; at his feet a captive. (Gold coin in the British Museum. Cf. De Witte, *Revue Numism.*, the elder Tetricus, pl. xl. No. 162.)

⁴ At least he was so considered; but it cannot be proved that he was of that illustrious family of Pisos whom Horace calls *Pompilius sanguis* (*Ars poet.* 292) because they claimed descent from Numa. Nor is it even certain that Piso assumed the purple.

wholly lost in pleasure, while the Barbarians were overrunning the provinces at their will. Under stress of necessity, patriotism re-awakened; and since nothing could be expected from Rome, men looked to themselves for their preservation. The legions formed a permanent garrison of the provinces, and remained very long in the same places; for example, the Third Augustan occupied Numidia for three centuries. From this

COIN OF PACATIANUS.¹YOUNG ROMAN.²

resulted intimate relations between the army and the country. The soldier married there, the legion was recruited thence, and the troops borrowed the manners and beliefs of the country in which they lived. We have had occasion more than once to show that the differences between the armies of Gaul and of Syria corresponded to the differences between the two countries. By degrees these multiplied bonds had made the legionaries, as it were, the representatives of those whom it was their duty to protect, and during the eclipse of the universal Empire the provincial interest personified itself

in provincial emperors. Almost simultaneously, Gaul, Illyria, Moesia, Pannonia, Greece, and Thessaly proclaimed their respective governors; and the provinces were so much in sympathy with the

¹ Coin of Pacatianus; emperor in Pannonia or in Rhaetia. IMP. TI. CL. MAR. PACATIANVS AVG. and the radiate head of the provincial Emperor. On the reverse: ROMAE AETERNAE AN[no] MILL[esimo] ET PRIMO (the year 1001 of Rome, 248 A. D.); in the centre Rome seated. (Silver coin.)

² Young Roman, supposed to be Saloninus. Marble of the Museum of the Louvre.



TRIUMPHAL ARCH OF GALLIENUS AT ROME.

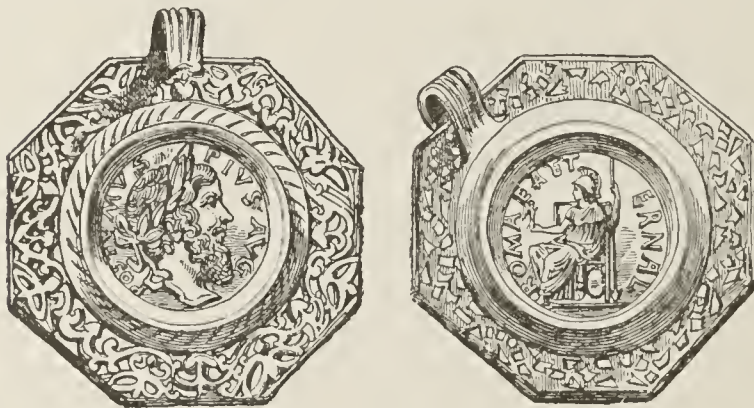
soldiers that they shared their fortunes. In a province where Gallienus was able to overthrow one of his rivals, the civilians suffered as much as the soldiers; the legions were decimated, but the cities also were filled with carnage like the camps.¹

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 8. This awakening of provincial patriotism is manifested by two things, — many cities (in Gaul, for example) abandon in the third century their Roman name to
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The most remarkable of these Emperors is Postumus.¹ He was a man of low condition,² but of great courage, and extremely popular in the Gallic provinces where he was born, and of which he had been the governor. When Gallienus quitted the country, in 258, he left his son Saloninus at Cologne, with the title of Caesar, under the care, not of Postumus, as would have seemed most natural, but under that of the tribune Silvanus; and Postumus was offended at this mark of distrust. On one occasion, when the latter had divided among the troops a rich booty recaptured from the Franks, Silvanus claimed the spoils as belonging to the Caesar. When Postumus made known this order,



SALONINUS CAESAR.
(BRONZE MEDALLION.)



GOLD COIN OF POSTUMUS.³

the soldiers, rather than give back what they had received, tore from their standards the effigies of Gallienus and Saloninus, and proclaimed their general (258). He led them to Cologne, obtained the surrender, after a long

siege, of the Caesar and his adviser, and put them both to death.⁴ The nations and armies of the Gallic provinces, Britain, and Spain took oath to the new Augustus.⁵ This was not the establishment

take their own; and when the Emperors dismember a government to form new provinces, they usually give the latter the limits that these territories had in the time of their independence.

¹ M. Cassianus Latinus Postumus (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 4,943).

² *Obscurissime natus* (Eutrop. ix. 9).

³ Coin of Postumus, bearing on the reverse Eternal Rome. Gold coin in an open setting and loop. Cf. De Witte, *op. cit.* pl. xvii. No. 265.

⁴ Eckhel (vii. 391, 438) places the surrender of Cologne in 259. The *Augustan History* (*Tyr. trig.* 3) represents Postumus as having a son whom Valerian had appointed tribune of the Vocontii, and whom his father had taken as colleague; but although we possess a great quantity of medals of Postumus, no one of them gives us ground to believe that this son, who seems to have been a person of only literary tastes, was made Caesar and afterwards Augustus, and the adoption of Victorinus confirms these doubts (Eckhel, vii. 447, and De Witte, *Revue de numism.* vol. iv., 1859).

⁵ Bréquigny, *Hist. de Post.* p. 356, in vol. xxx. of the *Mem. de l'Acad. des inscr.* This opinion rests, it is true, upon two doubtful readings of legends on coins which appear to belong to another period; but probability favors it (Eckhel, vii. 442).

of a Gallic, Spanish, or British empire: no one at this time thought of breaking with Rome; it was only breaking with Gallienus, and for protection uniting together under a famous soldier. Trèves was his capital. Here he gathered a senate, which decreed him all the titles attributed to Emperors on the banks of the Tiber; but upon his coins—the sole history of him which we have¹—he preserved the image of the Eternal City (*Roma Aeterna*).

Under the purple the new Emperor still kept his military tunic. He prevented the Alemanni from entering Gaul, drove back the Franks by constructing on the right bank of the Rhine strong forts commanding the fords, and his fleet freed the British waters from Saxon pirates. On one of his medals, *Neptuno reduci* indicates that he led this expedition in person;² another attests his efforts to free from pestilence the troops and the provinces.³ Successes of which we know nothing gave him those imperatorial salutations not seen on coins since the time of Caracalla, and the surname *Germanicus Maximus*.⁵ Coins of the year 262 give him these titles for the fifth time; some of them represent a Victory crowning the Gallic Emperor, and others a trophy raised between two prostrate captives. After making his power felt among the Franks, he sought to draw them into an alliance; an auxiliary corps which he recruited among them in furnishing him with soldiers, gave him also a pledge of the fidelity of these tribes.



COIN OF
POSTUMUS.⁴

The usurper therefore fulfilled all the duties of a legitimate ruler; security reigned in the provinces, and commerce reappeared on the roads and rivers.⁶ To show whence came this security, Postumus caused the Rhine to be represented tranquilly leaning upon his urn, with the symbols of peace, an anchor, a reed, and

¹ M. de Witte has collected them in a learned volume. The senate of Postumus, like the Roman Senate, struck bronze coins with the stamp SC.

² Mionnet, ii. 61, 68.

³ *Salus exercitus* (*ibid.* 64).

⁴ NEPTVNO REDVCI. Reverse of a coin of copper alloy of Postumus.

⁵ The figure V. following this title appears to Eckhel (vii. 439) to signify a fifth victory gained over the Germans. Another coin, confirming this one, has IMP. V.

⁶ This is probably the meaning of the two medals which have the unusual legends: *Mercurio felici* and *Minerva faulrix* (Eckhel, vii. 445).

following with his gaze the peaceful current of his stream. The legend was expressive, — *Salus provinciarum*.¹

THE RHINE.²

In 262 Postumus celebrated the fifth year of his reign. Since the time of Augustus it had been customary to make a solemn observance of the decennalia only; but at the period of which we write, an Emperor esteemed himself fortunate to have lived half that time, and five years was the *grande aevi spatium* rarely exceeded by any.

Another distinguished general, Ingenuus, had been made Emperor by the troops of Pannonia (258);³ and the nations of that province had pronounced with ardor in favor of the man who had many times repulsed or driven into the Danube the Goths and Sarmatians. He was, however, defeated near Mursa by a skilful manœuvre of one of the imperial lieutenants, Aureolus, who with a furious cavalry charge broke the enemy's line. Ingenuus killed himself, or caused his attendant to kill him. Pannonia was deluged with blood;⁵ the province remembered it, and we shall soon see a new Emperor, Regalianus, made here.

COIN OF MACRIANUS.⁴

For the moment Gallienus, conqueror of the rebels of Pannonia, and also of the Alemanni, whom he had just now driven out of Italy, seemed in a position to wage successful war with Postumus; but bad news come from Asia: Valerian was a captive, and Balista had induced Macrianus⁶ to assume the purple. This

¹ The bronzes of Postumus are very defective; but his gold pieces equal the finest of the preceding Emperors, and his silver coins still contain a little pure metal, while those of Gallienus have none whatever. To judge by the pieces found in collections of buried money of this date, it appears that Gallic coins were not received in Italy, nor the coins of Gallienus in Gaul (Mommson, *Hist. de la Monn. rom.* iii. 124).

² The Rhine seated, leaning upon an urn and laying one hand on a vessel. Reverse of a copper coin of Postumus, with the legend: *SALVS PROVINCIVRM*.

³ Cf. *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 194 (Didot). It is possible that this revolt of Ingenuus was anterior to the Alemannic invasion of Italy.

⁴ *IMP. C. FVL. MACRIANVS P. F. AVG.* Radiate head of the Emperor. On the reverse: *MARTI PROBPVGNATORI* and the god Mars. Coin of copper alloy.

⁵ See the letter of Gallienus to Verianus Celer (Treb. Pollio, *Ingen.*).

⁶ Fulvius Macrianus. See in Treb. Pollio (*Tyr. trig.*, 12) the curious appeal of Balista to Macrianus.

Macrianus, a soldier of fortune, had risen from the lowest ranks in the army to the first positions of the state. His marriage and the liberality of Valerian, who treated him with confidence, had made him rich enough to be able out of his private fortune to pay on the spot the *donativum* to the troops. He is represented by ecclesiastical writers as having employed magical arts to induce Valerian to undertake the great persecution of 258. The Emperor was impelled thereto by reasons really no more valid, but seeming to him of importance. Pagan authors, on their part, reproach Macrianus with having urged his master to that fatal conference whence the



GOLD COIN OF THE
YOUNGER
MACRIANUS.



QUIETUS.
(MEDIUM BRONZE.)

Emperor never returned. These unauthorized accusations are not worthy of notice. Moreover, the man himself is not important, and his reign was very brief. He required, as a condition of accepting the Empire, that his two sons, the younger Macrianus and Quietus, should be made Augusti. Egypt acknowledged

him (260 or 261).

Through the energy of Odenathus the East had been delivered from the Persians; but it was needful to restore tranquillity to men's minds, discipline to the army, and a sense of security to the population. The task was one which might occupy a ruler for many years. Macrianus never thought of attempting it; his design was to extend his power rather than to consolidate it. Leaving Quietus and Balista in Asia, he crossed over into Europe with his other son, Macrianus, and thirty thousand men to overthrow Gallienus. He sent before him one of his generals, Piso, who was to rid him of Valens, the proconsul of Achaia, a man whose talents the newly made Emperor dreaded. Valens, feeling himself menaced, assumed the purple in Greece; it is said that Piso did the same in Thessaly,¹ where he took refuge. These two aspirants had, however, but few troops, and probably but little money, and they were to be placed between the two immense

¹ The eulogium upon Piso pronounced by the prince of the Senate, and the senatus-consultum which decreed him a triumphal statue (Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 20), prevent us from believing that Piso assumed the purple.

armies of Macrianus and Gallienus; disaffection broke out, and their soldiers killed them.¹

Aureolus had been rewarded for his services in defeating Ingenuus by the post of Master of the Cavalry and the government of the Illyrian provinces. He was the son of a Dacian shepherd, — a new proof that the highest ranks were recruited from a very low grade. Being sent to arrest the Syrian invasion, he was easily successful; a part of the army came over to him, and Macrianus perished, together with his son.² Thus the situation became simpler.



THE TEMPLE OF EPHEBUS.⁴

At the news of this success Odenathus besieged Quietus, the second son of Macrianus, in Emesa, and put him to death, and shortly after this caused the assassination of Balista, the only man who could be an obstacle to himself.³ The Palmyrene remained sole master of the Roman East, and Gallienus and Postumus divided between them the West.

These domestic strifes were not likely to arrest the incursions of the Goths and Sarmatians in Thrace and Asia. On the coast of Asia Minor these Barbarians burned the famous temple of Ephesus, which, with its twenty-seven columns of precious marble, each sixty feet high, the sculptures of Scopas, and the gifts of kings and nations heaped up within its walls, was esteemed one of the wonders of the world.⁵ In Moesia the Goths took Nicopolis, which had arrested the previous invasion, and in Macedon they besieged Thessalonica, the key to that province. Their bands, increased by escaped slaves, many of whom were of barbaric origin, went as far as Greece, where they found small plunder and many mountains, which rendered resistance easy; and they appear to have suffered a defeat

¹ It is possible that Piso was killed by the emissaries or by the troops of Valens, who assumed the surname of Thessalicus. (*Ibid.*)

² In the ninth year of the reign of Gallienus; that is to say, before the 29th of August, 262, probably at the close of 261.

³ According to other accounts, Odenathus spared Balista, who lived in retirement on an estate which he possessed near Daphne.

⁴ ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ. The statue of Diana within the temple. Reverse of large bronze of Hadrian.

⁵ The temple was 425 feet long, and 220 wide (Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvi. 21). The Roman foot was 11.655 inches. [Cf. now the remarkable explorations and restoration of this temple in Mr. Wood's *Ephesus*. — ED.]

there.¹ Jordanes speaks of the childish delight of the Goths when on their return they found themselves at the foot of the Balkans, near the hot springs of Anchialos (262–263).²

Byzantium, the bulwark of the Empire in these regions, had a numerous garrison, which, probably on account of some delay in receiving pay, revolted, and pillaged the city. Gallienus hastened thither, and, as his custom was, showed himself very severe in the punishment which he inflicted. He remained there some months to intimidate the Barbarians, who had reappeared in Cappadocia, and to restore these provinces to order, rebuilding the fortifications of many of the cities. He also carried on negotiations with Odenathus, which resulted in his accepting the Arab chief as his colleague in the Empire (264). On his return to Rome he celebrated, with all the magnificence that the precarious state of the finances permitted, the tenth year of his unfortunate reign.



REVERSE OF A COIN
OF GALLIENUS.³



COIN OF COPPER
ALLOY.⁶

In the spring of 264 Gallienus at last prepared to avenge his son and recover the Gallic provinces.⁴ It is said⁵ that he proposed to Postumus to decide their quarrel by single combat; to which the Gallic Emperor replied that he was not a gladiator. Aureolus commanded the troops of Gallienus; he either would not or could not take advantage of an important victory to overwhelm Postumus, and the war was protracted. Notwithstanding the defection of a general of Victorinus,⁷ the Italian Caesar—who with several legions went over to the side of the Gallic Caesar, and was by the latter associated with himself in the imperial power (265)⁸—Postumus

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 5.

² The *aquae calidae* were fifteen miles to the north of this city, which stood on the shore of the Black Sea, and they had a great reputation, *inter reliqua totius mundi thermorum innumerabilium loca omnino praecipue ad sanitatem infirmorum efficacissimae* (Jordanes, 20).

³ LEG. XXX. VLP[ia] VI P [sextum pia] VI F [sextum fidelis]. Neptune standing (copper alloy).

⁴ Eckhel (vii. 238) asserts that there had been hostilities between Gallienus and Postumus since the year 260.

⁵ *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 194.

⁶ Victorinus wearing the radiate crown.

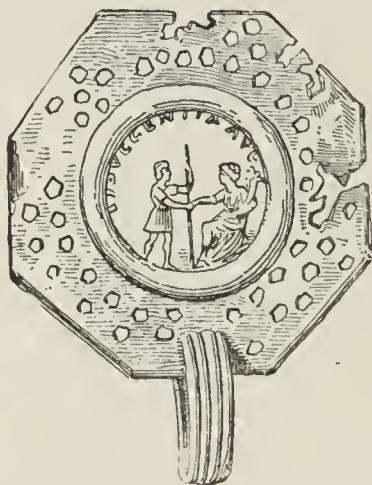
⁷ At least the coins of Victorinus bear the names of legions that are known to have been in the army of Gallienus. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 402, 451.)

⁸ This is the well-authorized opinion of M. de Witte, *Revue de num.*, new series, vol. vi. 1861.

was obliged to take refuge in a fortified town, where the imperial troops besieged him. Gallienus was wounded with an arrow



VICTORINUS CROWNED WITH
LAUREL.¹



REVERSE OF A GOLD MEDAL-
LION OF VICTORINUS.²

during the siege; and his wound, together with the unpromising aspect of the war, decided him to abandon the task he had undertaken. He returned into Italy, leaving Aureolus to guard the Alpine passes, — a precaution which proves that.

the expedition into Gaul had not ended well.

Postumus, however, half victorious, half vanquished, lost in this war the prestige he had obtained by his successful encounters with the Barbarians. A competitor, Laelianus,³ appeared against him. He defeated this general; but having refused his troops the pillage of Mayence, the principal seat of the rebellion, a tumult broke out, in which he and his son were killed (267). The Germans took advantage of these disturbances to recommence their predatory expeditions, and burned several Gallic cities. Laelianus, respited by the death of Postumus, obtained some advantages over them, — attested by his coins,⁵ — and rebuilt the forts which they had destroyed on the right bank of the Rhine; but the soldiers, offended by the labors which he required of them, murdered him.



LAELIANUS.⁴

Victorinus had doubtless instigated this tragedy, which relieved him from a competitor; but another immediately came forward, — Marius, formerly a blacksmith. The *Augustan History* assigns to

¹ Gold medallion in an open setting. (Collection of the Hague; J. de Witte, *Recherches*, etc., pl. xxvi. No. 24.)

² INDVLGENTIA AVG[usta]. The Emperor, standing, assisting a kneeling figure to rise.

³ *Revue de num.* vol. iv. 1859.

⁴ Laelianus crowned with laurel. (Gold Coin.)

⁵ Cohen, v. 60. One coin of Laelianus represents Spain, where he certainly never was in command, but he included it in his government (Eckhel, vii. 449).

this person only three days' reign, in order to say that on the first day he was made emperor, on the second he reigned, and on the third he was dethroned. It is probable,



COIN OF MARIUS.¹

however, that the time was somewhat longer; an old comrade, whose hand he had refused to touch, struck him with a sword which, as the story went, they had forged together.²

The former colleague of Postumus, Victorinus,³ had remained during these catastrophes the emperor of the Gallic provinces. He was born of a rich family, and one of his kindred, Tetricus, governed Aquitaine. These ties of relationship consolidated his power, making him a national ruler in the eyes of the Gauls; and he appeared so formidable to Gallienus that the latter, far from attacking him in Gaul, feared lest he should come to seek the empire of Italy as well. But habits of the grossest debauchery tarnished the merits of Victorinus, and he was assassinated at Cologne by one of his own officers whose wife he had outraged (268).⁵



THE EMPEROR MARIUS.⁴

The true ruler during this reign had been Victorina, the Emperor's mother, a woman of masculine courage, the Zenobia of

¹ IMP. C. MARIVS AVG., around the radiate head of the Gallic Emperor. On the reverse, SAEC[uli] FELICITAS, and Felicity standing (coin of copper alloy).

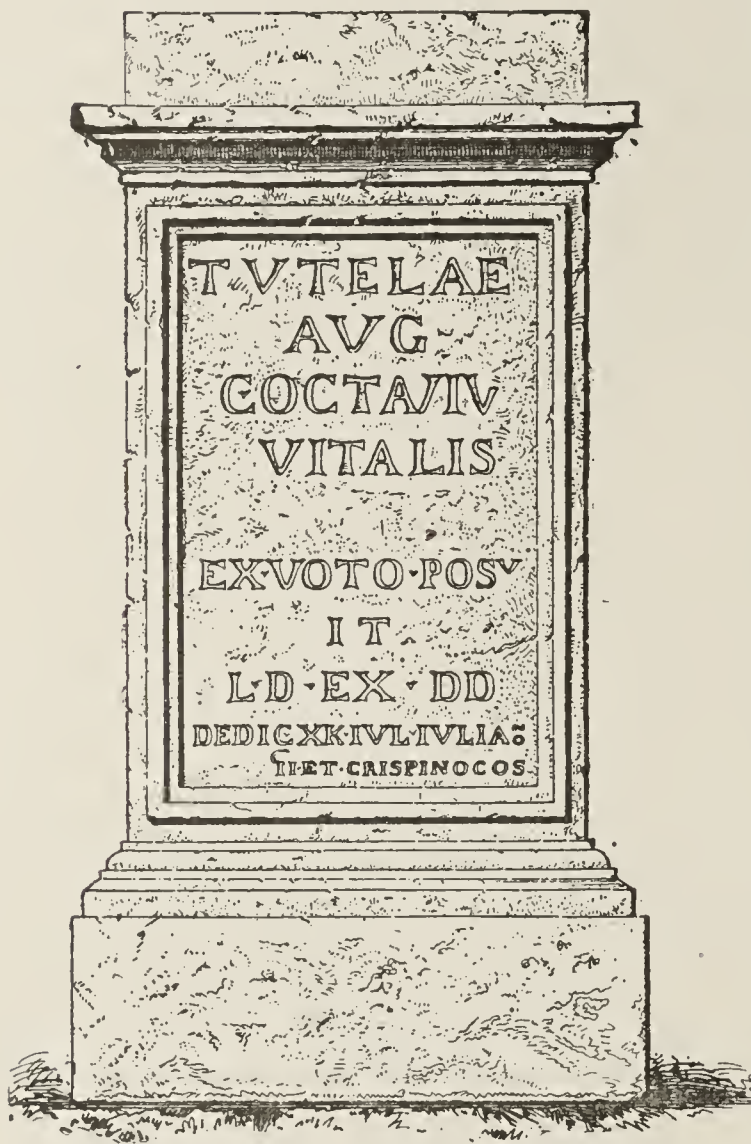
² We have coins and inscriptions of his which compel us to believe that his reign was not so short. De Boze (*Mém. de l'acad.* xxvi. 512) gives him a reign of four or five months, — from September or October, 267, to January or February, 268.

³ Marcus Piavonius Victorinus (Or.-Henzen. No. 5,548; Eckhel, vii. 450).

⁴ Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France* (20 millim. by 17), No. 2,105 of the Catalogue.

⁵ In the beginning of this year, and again in March, the Senate begs Claudius to overthrow Tetricus. Coins of Victorinus have lately been found in England.

the West, who by her largesses exercised great influence over the army. The soldiers called her the "mother of the camps," and a



ALTAR OF TUTELA FOUND AT BORDEAUX.²

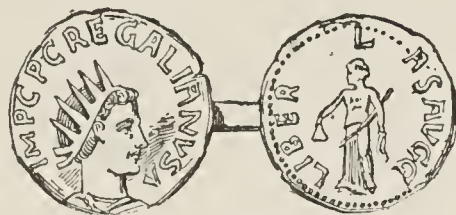
medal — the authenticity of which, however, is doubtful — gives her the imperial title. If she did not take this title, she at least disposed of it, causing the army to acknowledge as emperor Tetricus, her kinsman,¹ a prudent man averse to power, and only anxious to keep away from the camps, where rulers were made and unmade so quickly. He established himself at Bordeaux under the protection of the goddess Tutela; and we leave him there philosophically awaiting Aurelian and the termination of an imperial power which he had not desired.

A Dacian, Regalianus, believed to be a descendant of the famous Decebalus, had the government of Pannonia and Moesia. He had shown himself an able general, and could boast of several victories over the Sarmatians. This was enough to determine both soldiers and provincials to make emperor a man who gave to the former booty, and to the latter security, especially while the memory of the cruelties of Gallienus in that province were still fresh in the minds of all. Regalianus was therefore invested with the purple.

¹ C. Pius Esuvius Tetricus (Borghesi, vol. vii. p. 430, note 4). He was proclaimed at Bordeaux before March, 268. De Witte, *Revue de numism.*, vol. vi. 1861, and *Recherches sur les empereurs qui ont régné dans les Gaules au troisième siècle*.

² This pedestal doubtless bore a statue of Tutela, — the personified protecting power of the gods, a divinity much honored at Bordeaux. The inscription is of the year 224. Cf. Ch. Robert, *Culte de Tutela*, in the *Mémoires de la Soc. arch. de Bordeaux*.

This was the establishment of a Pannonian empire, after the manner in which the empires of Gaul and of the East had been established, and for the same reasons; namely, the defence of the territory committed to the worthiest, because the official Emperor failed to make it secure. Regalianus came to a violent end,—according to some, in a revolt among his own people;¹ according to others, by an attack from Gallienus.

COIN OF REGALIANUS.²

Seeing the Empire thus parcelled out, there was no man too insignificant to desire to have his share. Of Antoninus, Memor, and Cecrops, we know only the names; of Saturninus we have only this saying to his soldiers: “Comrades, you lose a good general, and you make a worthless emperor;” of Celsus, this anecdote, that his partisans not finding the purple mantle which was indispensable for the consecration of an emperor, threw over him the robe of the *dea caelestis* of Carthage. The great goddess was scandalized, no doubt, at this impiety, for Celsus was killed almost immediately. His body was thrown to the dogs, which devoured it, and his effigy nailed to the cross on which criminals suffered, that the infamy of this unfortunate man, who had reigned seven days, might be made eternal.

AEMILIANUS LAURELLED.
(LARGE BRONZE.)

Aemilianus, on the banks of the Nile, enjoyed his ephemeral dignity a little while longer, until Gallienus, being in need of the Egyptian wheat, sent against him Theodotus, whose services and fidelity had already been proved in Gaul. Aemilianus was defeated and taken prisoner, and soon after was strangled in his dungeon. In the number of usurpers is also placed one Trebellianus, a chief of those Isaurian mountaineers whom Rome had never civilized or disciplined. A bandit by trade, a pirate, he took advantage of the universal disorganization to extend his predatory expeditions. A brother of Theodotus defeated and killed him. Such is the perpet-

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 10.

² IMP. C. P. C. REGALIANVS AVG.; radiate head of Regalianus. On the reverse: LIBER[a]L[it]AS AVG.; Liberty standing, holding a freedman's cap and a sceptre. (Silver coin.)

ually recurring termination of all these narratives. Local patriotism was keen enough for the desire to prevail of having a national chief; it was not persevering enough long to maintain these



AEMILIANUS BEFORE HIS ACCESSION (PROBABLE).¹

provincial Emperors, who, owing their elevation to disorder and public calamity, became in their turn its victims. Revolts continued because they had begun, and men killed because they had killed.

One only of these usurpers so quickly overthrown interests us, — the king of Palmyra, founder of a half Arab state, who, if he had been able to establish his authority, would have changed the face of the East. For this it was needful that Odenathus should live; but, like all the others, he was assassinated. We shall again refer to this murder and to this kingdom in the history of Aurelian.

What was Gallienus doing in the midst of these catastrophes? One of the old authors loads him with maledictions;² another represents him laboring diligently to avert the public misfortunes.³ When news came of the defection of the Gauls and of Egypt, Pollio represents him as saying: "Can we not live, then, without Egyptian linen and tapestry?" At the same time, he was not

¹ Bust of the Museum of Lyons (Comarmond, *Descr. des Antiques*, etc., pl. 9, No. 152).

² Treb. Pollio, in the *Augustan History*. This author wrote in the time of the Caesar Constantius, a descendant of Claudius II. (*Gall.* 14), and Claudius caused the murder of Gallienus; Pollio therefore regarded Gallienus as a criminal.

³ Zosimus, i. 30-45.

destitute of courage; he loved poetry, eloquence, the arts, and he was on the point of giving Plotinus, at the request of the Empress Salonina, a district in Campania (to be called Platonopolis), that the philosopher might try the experiment of Plato's Republic. But of what value are these mental endowments, — the splendid and beautiful adornment of more prosperous reigns? At such a time as this the Empire needed, not a maker of Greek and Latin verses, but a soldier. Gallienus might have reigned like Aurelian, Probus, and Diocletian. If he did not do this, it was because of his incapacity, and we may leave him with his poor reputation.

In 267 Aureolus, once a Dacian shepherd,¹ but a brave soldier, the conqueror of Macrianus in Thrace, and the adversary of Postumus in Gaul, was left to guard with an army the passes of the Western Alps against Victorinus, while Gallienus went to drive out of Illyria the Barbarians who had unexpectedly appeared there. These invaders came from afar; from the Sea of Azof five hundred vessels had set out, in which no strength was wasted, for they carried a multitude of warriors,² who at sea were rowers, and on land were fighting-men. They crossed the Bosphorus, the Propontis, and the Hellespont, killing and pillaging. When Mithridates besieged Cyzicus, four centuries earlier, that city had three arsenals filled with weapons, grain, machines of war, and in its harbor were two hundred galleys. Notwithstanding the many formidable warnings given these populations during the last thirty years, the Goths found no preparations for defence. They pillaged the city, and Lemnos and Scyros shared the same fate. The Peloponnesus and Epirus were ravaged, and one of their bands surprised Athens, whence the population fled. A monk of the twelfth century relates that the Goths, having collected in a heap all the books found in the city, were about to give to the flames these products of a civilization which they despised, when one of their chiefs deterred them. "Let us leave to the Greeks," he said, "these books, which render them so effeminate and unwarlike." Montaigne³

¹ Zonaras, xii. 24.

² Gibbon says fifteen thousand, taking for authority a text of Strabo, which allows from twenty-five to thirty men as a crew for the vessels of the Euxine. But we have no proof that, three centuries later than Strabo, these vessels were no larger.

³ *Essais*, i. 24. It is a reminiscence of the words quoted by Cicero in the *De Senectute*. 13, in speaking of the doctrines of Epicurus.

repeats this story, and Rousseau quotes it after him. An Athenian proved to them, however, that a man could be both a scholar and a soldier. Cleodemos, says Zonaras, rallied the fugitives, armed a few vessels, and killed a great number of marauders; the rest fled.¹ Zonaras is wrong as to the author of this bold stroke: the last of the Athenian heroes was the historian Dexippos. The city having been taken by surprise, two thousand Athenians escaped to a wooded hill, and there resisted all attacks. Other Greeks gathered in this "camp of refuge;" successful sorties were made, and some imperial galleys, coming up, destroyed the vessels of the Barbarians. The latter were not dismayed by this disaster, but made their way overland to their companions who were pillaging the Peloponnesus and Boeotia; they entered Acarnania by way of Epirus, and formed the bold design of returning home through Illyricum. This was the invasion which Gallienus set out to repel. He destroyed some of their bands, bought over others, and made one of their chiefs consul. We are tempted to believe that he put the consular toga upon the shoulders of this Herulan with the same feelings that we experience in giving a plumed hat to some negro king on the African coast. But this son-in-law of the Marcomanni, so much under the influence of Pipa, his young barbaric wife,² chose to give the ceremony all possible official grandeur; and the fact is more important than it at first appears. We have seen already how the Barbarians, admitted into the auxiliary troops, and then made citizens, filled the legions. We now see them pass, without change, from Barbarism to the consulship. The invasion was going on in the lower ranks, it will be seen also in the upper;³ and in consequence of this slow but continuous infiltration it was really completed on the day when it appears to begin, — with the furious attack of 405. Thus for two centuries all things continued to grow worse in this Empire, still Roman on the surface, but in reality more and more permeated every day with Germanic elements.⁴

¹ Zonaras, xii. 26.

² . . . *Quam is perdit dilexerit.* To please her he covered his black locks with gold powder, and would have his friends do the same. *Gallienus cum suis semper flavo crinem condit* (Trebellianus Pollio, *Salon. Gall.* 3).

³ See, p. 196, what lieutenants Valerian gave to Aurelian.

⁴ A medal of this year commemorates a naval victory over the Goths, who, returning from

While Gallienus was fighting in Illyria, Aureolus found the occasion propitious to stir up revolt in Italy and seize upon Rome. The Emperor defeated him at Pontirolo (Pons Aureoli), upon the Adda, and held him besieged in Milan. But in the imperial camp, Aurelian, Heraclius, and Claudius, the most important generals in the army, conspired against the violent and feeble ruler under whom the Empire had fallen so low. One day, when at the news of a sortie attempted by Aureolus, Gallienus had flung himself unarmed upon a horse, a conspirator pierced him with an arrow (March 22, 268). His brother Valerianus was also killed; this young man was of amiable character and brilliant talents, and dying at an age when many hopes centred in him, left a much-loved memory. Claudius had ordered his death for reasons of state; but he erected to him a monument, on which these words were engraved, wherein we seem to read a half-stifled regret: *Valerianus, imperator*.¹

We have had occasion to remark that the entire defence in this reign stops at the Danube and the Rhine: this signifies that the Decumatian lands and Dacia, where the early Empire kept Barbarism in check, were lost.² Nor were the Roman troops any longer able to guard the line of the two rivers, which armed bands incessantly crossed in the intervals of the great invasions, so that disquietude prevailed everywhere. It was a condition similar to that of France at the time of the Norman incursions. Consequently (as later was done in the beginning of feudal times, and for the same reasons) the provinces were covered with fortified castles, and the walls of cities were made strong again. Gallienus rebuilt those of Verona, the gate of Italy,³ and employed two

Asia laden with spoils, were scattered by a tempest upon the Euxine, and later by a Roman flotilla (Eckhel, vii. 394, and Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 12).

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Valeriani duo*, 8. He was the son of Valerian's second wife. Eckhel (vii. 427-435) believes that he was neither Caesar nor Augustus, notwithstanding the positive assertion of Trebellius Pollio. The word *imperator* would be then merely the military title; but this title had for many years been given only to sovereigns. Zonaras says that a second son of Gallienus was put to death by order of the Senate.

² Aur. Victor, Eutropius, and Orosius (vii. 22) place the loss of Dacia in this reign. The series of coins of Odessus (near Varna), which begin with Trajan and end with Salonina, the wife of Gallienus, prove that this part of Moesia (where the Goths had destroyed Istria) was in process of being detached from the Empire.

³ Accordingly Verona took his name: *Colonia Augusta Verona Nova Gallieniana*; inscription over the gate of Verona, now called *de' Borsari* (C. I. L. v. 3,329).

Byzantine engineers to fortify the towns of Moesia;¹ Claudius II. later reconstructed the walls of Nicaea;² Aurelian and Probus undoubtedly continued these defensive works; and as the Barbarians penetrated far into the provinces, the cities of the interior, as well as those of the frontiers, surrounded themselves with ramparts.³ The Emperors of the first two centuries of the Christian era had not required so much precaution, for the reason that they had made the Empire one great city, peaceful and industrious, needing to be protected by outposts only, which good discipline rendered perfectly inaccessible. The two periods are characterized by their monuments: in one, the works of peace, strength, and security; in the other, the works of war, of weakness and alarm.

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 13: . . . *Instaurandis urbibus muniendisq[ue] praecepit*. One of these engineers was named Athenaeus, and we have from an author of this name, in the *Mathematici veteres*, 1693, a treatise on machines of war.

² Letronne, *Journal des Savants*, 1827.

³ See above, p. 219.

THIRTEENTH PERIOD.

THE ILLYRIAN EMPERORS: THE EMPIRE STRENGTHENED.

CHAPTER XCVII.

CLAUDIUS AND AURELIAN (268-275 A.D.).

I. — CLAUDIUS II. (268-270); THE FIRST INVASION REPULSED.

THE conspirators of the camp of Milan were very different men from the praetorians who had formerly put the Empire up to auction. They were brave soldiers, determined to make an end to the disgrace of Rome by the re-establishment of discipline and a vigorous prosecution of the war against the Barbarians. They selected for emperor that one of their comrades who seemed to be the most experienced and who was the most conspicuous, Claudius the Dalmatian.¹ The flatterers of Constantius Chlorus, his grand-nephew, gave Claudius for ancestor the Trojan Dardanus; but he had made his own rank. Decius had declared him indispensable to the state; Valerian held him in high esteem, and Gallienus dreaded his judgment.

Under Valerian, Claudius had held the government of Illyricum and the command of the troops posted from the Alps to the Euxine, with the salary of a prefect of Egypt, the honors of the

¹ Marcus Aurelius Claudius. Trebellius Pollio (*In Claudio*, ?) gives him the *nomen gentilicium* of Flavius, which passed to all his posterity. Zosimus and Zonaras say that he was a member of the conspiracy, — and this is doubtless the fact, although Julian, his kinsman, denies it. He had two brothers, Quintillus, of whom we shall speak later, and Crispus, whose daughter Claudia, married to Eutropius, was the mother of Constantius Chlorus.

proconsul of Africa, and a suite as numerous as that of the Emperor,¹ — in which we see that the luxury of Oriental courts had invaded the court of Rome, transforming, even in these times of disaster, the simple *comitatus* of the early proconsuls into a royal suite ruinous to the public finances. The weakness of Gallienus exasperated Claudius; something of this came to the Emperor's ears, who made haste to write to one of his officers a deprecatory letter,



GOLD BRACELET.²

wherein is revealed the miserable condition of these Augusti, who knew neither how to command nor how to make themselves obeyed: —

“I learn with the deepest regret by your report that Claudius, our kinsman and friend, is greatly offended with me on account of rumors — mostly untrue — which have been brought him. I beg you, my dear Venustus, if you will do me a service, to employ Gratus and Herennianus to appease him. But

let it all be done secretly, lest the Dacian soldiers, already discontented, should proceed to some dangerous extremity. I send him presents. Persuade him to receive them courteously; but let him not suspect that I know his sentiments towards me, for if he believed me to have cause of resentment against him, he might take violent action.”³

¹ *Salarii quantum habet Aegypti praefectura, tantum vestium quantum proconsulatu Africano detulimus, tantum argenti quantum accipit curator Illyrici* (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 15).

² Gold braeelet adorned with a coin of Claudius Gothicus. (Cabinet of Vienna.) Cf. Ar-neth, *Gold und Silb.* pl. vi. 11. This braeelet (about twice the size of the figure) bears four coins enehased, — Marcus Aurelius, Caracalla, Gordian III., and Claudius II., — and proves, like the necklace found at Naix (see frontispiece of Seet. I. of this volume) and many aurei which we have already given, the taste of the Romans for jewels of this kind.

³ These gifts, which the Emperor enumerates in his letter, were as follows: “Two cups of three pounds weight, adorned with precious stones; two gold cups of three pounds, enriched with gems; a basin of chased silver of twenty pounds; a silver dish with chasing of vine-leaves of thirty pounds; another great silver dish, with ivy-leaves, of twenty-three pounds; a silver basin of twenty pounds weight, whereon is engraved a fish; two silver pitchers inlaid with gold of six pounds weight, and some small silver vases, weighing collectively twenty-five pounds; ten Egyptian cups of divers workmanship; two eloaks of brilliant color with purple borders; sixteen garments of various kinds; a white tunic, half silk; a linen garment, with silk bands embroidered with gold, of the weight of three ounces; three pairs of our boots of Persian leather; ten Dalmatian belts; a Dardanian ehlamys in the form of a mantle; an Illyrian cloak

Gallienus hoped to pay his ransom in this way; but probably Claudius only despised him the more for it. When the conspirators proclaimed the new Emperor, the soldiers showed some discontent, in order to make their price higher. Twenty pieces of gold distributed to each man removed all scruples. They declared Gallienus a tyrant; and the Senate, with more genuine eagerness, did the same. They despatched to the Gemoniae the servants of the man who had been displeased at any trace of patriotism in the senators;¹ and it is related that in the curia itself one of the officers of the treasury had his eyes put out,² — a shameful act of cruelty, a presage of the degenerate days of the Later Empire. Claudius put a stop to these executions, and the Conscript Fathers, repenting, placed Gallienus among the *divi*, — which was equivalent to the maintenance of his acts.

When they heard of the election of Claudius, they confirmed it by those repeated acclamations which seem to us so contrary to senatorial gravity, but were at that time a surprise to no one: “Augustus Claudius, the gods grant you to our prayers” (repeated sixty times); “Claudius Augustus, it is you, or a ruler resembling you, whom we have ever desired” (forty times); “Claudius Augustus, the wishes of the state call you to the throne” (forty times); “Claudius Augustus, you are the model of brothers, fathers, friends, senators, and rulers” (eighty times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from Aureolus” (five times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from the Palmyrenes” (five times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from Zenobia and Victorina” (seven times); “Claudius Augustus, may Tetricus be nought” (seven times).³

Claudius in fact found himself in the presence of three adversaries. With better judgment than the Senate possessed, he neglected two of them, who were far away, at the extremities of the Empire; rapidly disposed of the third, whom a judgment of the soldiers condemned to death; and occupied himself with preparing for a great war against the Barbarians. “The matter of Tetricus,”

for bad weather; an over-garment with a hood; two furred hoods; four pieces of Phoenician stuffs; 150 gold Valerians and 300 *trientes saloninienses*.”

¹ See p. 239.

² . . . *Patronoque fisci in curiam perducto effossos oculos pependisse satis constat* (Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 33).

³ Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 4.

he said to the Senate, "concerns myself only; that of the Goths is of importance to the state."¹

For the last thirty years these Barbarians had been ravaging the Roman frontiers; as booty became scarce, they formed the idea of establishing themselves as a nation in the interior of the Empire, whose climate they knew to be milder than that of the Scythian plains, where extremes of cold and heat made life hard. Messengers were sent from the banks of the Dniester to those of the Morava (March); councils were held among the Tervingae, or Eastern Goths, among the Gepidae, the Heruli, the Peucinii; and a vast coalition was formed to second the invasion of the Eastern Goths by a series of attacks upon the middle Danube. The Scordisci, of Celtic origin, entered the league; the Alemanni and their neighbors, the Juthungi,² doubtless informed as to these projects, promised themselves to take advantage of them to raid the rich valley of the Po. They even were the first to be ready. Without waiting for their allies, they rushed through the défiles of the Alps, which they had often before traversed, and came down in the year 268 upon the shores of the Lago di Garda (Benacus). Claudius met them there with an army which he had already been able to subject thoroughly to his authority, and half of the Barbarians fell under the sword of the legionaries. It was a good omen for the more serious strife to come.

During the winter of 268 the hatchet rang incessantly through the Sarmatian forests; the felled trees were rolled to the river banks, and in the spring these streams were covered with two thousand vessels,³ whereon tried warriors were embarked. The horde itself, consisting of three hundred and twenty thousand fighting-men,⁴—not to mention the women and children and slaves,—

¹ He took, however, some precautions to close Italy against the Gallie Emperor, and to threaten the provinces of the latter. An inscription recently discovered at Grenoble gives Claudius the title of *Germanicus Maximus*, which he took after his victories over the Alemanni, and reveals a fact which no historian has mentioned; namely, his making ready for a campaign against Tetricus. This inscription is engraved at the base of a statue raised to Claudius by an army corps posted in Narbonensis, in which were some of the imperial guard (*protectores*), and whose commander was the *perfectissimus* Julius Placidianus, prefect of the watch (L. Renier, in the *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres*, July 18, 1879).

² Amm. Marellinus (xvii. 6) says of the Juthungi: *Alamannorum pars*.

³ Zosimus (i. 42) says six thousand.

⁴ This is the statement of Claudius in his letter to the Senate.

set out on its march westward, with innumerable flocks,¹ and great wagons which were made to serve as protection to their



ROMAN TROOPER TREADING A GERMAN UNDER HIS HORSE'S FEET.²

camps.³ The army and the fleet followed the coast, keeping

¹ The Barbarians habitually drove their flocks along with them, in order to secure their subsistence. We read in the *Augustan History* that under Valerian, — that is to say, before the great invasion, — Aurelian took from some bands in Thrace oxen and horses enough to supply the province, and that he was able also to send to one of the Emperor's villas 2,000 cows, 1,000 mares, 10,000 sheep, and 15,000 goats. This was the booty most frequently obtained from the Barbarians. Accordingly, Treb. Pollio (*Claud.* 9) exclaims, after the Emperor's great victory: *Quid boum barbarorum nostri videre majores, quid ovium, quid equarum?*

² Monument found near Zahlbach (Museum of Mayence). The Barbarian is recognizable by his long hair and his curved sword (*L. Stracke, op. cit.* p. 59).

³ This use was so well known to the Romans that they invented a new word to express

at some distance from it,—the former to avoid the marshes which the sluggish rivers of this region create at their mouths, the latter on account of the shoals which the alluvial deposits form to a considerable distance.¹ The Danube was crossed by aid of the vessels, and a few days' march brought the Goths in sight of Tomi. Preceding invasions had made clear to all the cities in this region the necessity of reconstructing their walls and putting themselves in a state of defence. Tomi closed its gates; the inhabitants manned their walls, and the Goths were not in a condition to effect a breach. Being unable to delay



COIN OF TOMUS.²

in these plains of the Dobroudja, where it is so difficult to live, they set out towards the Balkans in the direction of Marcianopolis (eighteen miles eastward of Varna). This city, built by Trajan, was worthy of its founder, and stood firm against all attacks.

Upon this the Barbarians conceived a skilful design: they separated; the fleet sailed towards the Propontis, threatened Byzantium and Cyzicus, and then, notwithstanding a tempest which cost it a great loss of men and vessels, reached the peninsula of Athos, where they again separated. Part of them besieged Cassandreia (the ancient Potidaea) and the great city of Thessalonica, to open a way into Macedon. The others ravaged Greece, the Cyclades, Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus; and the storm, losing its strength as it went on, at last died away on the shores of Pamphylia.

While the rumor of these raids detained in the southern part of the Empire those Roman forces which were in the neighborhood of the Aegean Sea, the main attack of the Barbarians was made on the North. The Goths traversed Moesia, and arrived in the valley of the Margus (the Morava), being well aware that they

it . . . *facta carragine* (Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 13, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxxi. 7). The Goths before the battle of Adrianople, Attila after the battle of Châlons, shut themselves within a wall made of their wagons; and the emigrants upon the plains of the Territories of the United States do the same at this day.

¹ Whatever may have been the number of vessels, the fleet could not have carried the entire army, and the history of this invasion is incomprehensible unless we admit that there was both a land and a sea force.

² Bust of Tomus. On the reverse, TOMI TIMO, and an eagle within an oak-wreath. (Bronze coin.)

could not establish themselves peacefully on the right bank of the Danube until after they had destroyed the imperial army. Never, since the Gauls and Hannibal, had Rome been in so great danger. Claudius wrote to the Senate: "I must tell you the truth, Conscript Fathers. Three hundred thousand Barbarians have invaded Roman territory. If I am successful, you will acknowledge that we have deserved well of our country. If I am not victorious, remember whom I follow. The state is exhausted, and we fight after Valerian, after Ingenuus, after Regalianus, after Laelianus, after Postumus, after Celsus, after many others, who have been detached from the state on account of the contempt inspired by Gallienus. We are deficient in bucklers and swords and javelins. Tetricus is master of the Gallic and Spanish provinces, which are the strength of the Empire; and — I am ashamed to say it — our archers are all serving under Zenobia. Whatever little we may do, our successes will be as great as you have a right to expect."²

SMALL BRONZE.¹

Claudius acted with discretion. He did not advance directly upon this enormous mass. Leaving his brother Quintillus at the head of a considerable army in the neighborhood of Aquileia, to keep secure this gate into Italy, he himself traversed Illyria, entered Macedon by the pass of Scupi, and halted in the upper valley of the Axios. He thus placed himself between the fleet of the Goths and their land army. Protected against the latter by Mount Orbelos, he could by the Axios, which falls into the extremity of the Thermaic Gulf, keep watch over the coast. If the siege-machines which the Barbarians had caused to be constructed by Roman fugitives should overcome the resistance of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, the Emperor would be able to hinder the victors from passing over into Macedon and effecting a junction with their comrades. This position permitted him, therefore, to wait his time for striking a decisive blow.

But the Goths were not able to storm a well-defended city, and they had not the patience to reduce it by famine.³ At the

¹ Quintillus, brother of Claudius II.

² Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 7.

³ To preserve the memory of the brave resistance made by Thessalonica, a bronze medal was struck in honor of the god Cabirus (*Deo Cabiro*), the protecting divinity of the city, who doubtless came thither from Samothrace, the sanctuary of the Cabiri. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 472.)

news of the approach of Claudius they marched boldly to meet him; Aurelian, whom the Emperor had appointed chief of the cavalry, arrested them by an engagement, in which the Dalmatian horse distinguished themselves. Three thousand Goths were killed, many more were taken prisoners, and Claudius, now set free to move



GOths — MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN — LED INTO SLAVERY.¹

northward by the discomfiture of the southern enemy, went across the mountains in search of the great army in the valley of the Margus. The battle took place near Naissus (Nissa); it was long and sanguinary. A corps, which found the opportunity to advance through an unguarded road, turned the enemy's flank and fell upon their rear. This movement was fatal to the Barbarians: fifty thousand remained upon the field (269),² and the others, cut off from the valley of the Danube, fell in scattered bands upon Macedon and

¹ Bas-relief from a sarcophagus of the third century (Vatican).

² We have medals of Claudius of this year which represent him with the radiate crown. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 471.)

Thrace. The legions separated to pursue them; the war was broken into fragments, and it became impossible to repeat the blow struck at Naissus. From time to time the Barbarians halted behind the wall of their wagons, — a movable fortification, whence they made successful sorties against those of the Romans who ventured in too small force into their neighborhood. Nevertheless, wasted by



ROMAN AUXILIARY HORSEMAN (MUSEUM OF MAYENCE).

continual attacks, by hunger, and by disease, they perished in multitudes. A somewhat numerous troop succeeded in taking refuge in the Balkans. The Romans followed them thither, and barred all egress from the mountain, where during the severe winter provisions were lacking; and to complete their destruction, Claudius entered the defiles and put them to the sword (270).

The Emperor prepared his bulletin of victory with a rhetoric

not unpardonable: "We have destroyed a hundred and twenty thousand Goths, and sunk two thousand vessels. The water of the river is concealed under the bucklers that it bears along with it, the banks under broken swords and lances, the fields under the bones of the dead. The roads are all choked with the enormous baggage the enemy have left behind them."¹

The imperial fleet had also been successful in destroying what remained of the vessels that had come from the Dniester;² so that



COIN OF
CLAUDIUS II.³

of this vast multitude, very few returned to the regions they had left a year before so full of hope and courage. Those who had not perished were sent to cultivate as slaves or colonists the lands of the conquerors, and their wives were distributed among the Roman soldiers. A certain number of their young men were enrolled in the cohorts, and others sent to Rome to fight in the amphitheatres. The capital doubtless was not the only city honored with "a present of gladiators." Claudius would naturally grant the same favor to many cities, that all Italy might see serving its pleasures those Goths who, during an entire generation, had inspired it with so much alarm.⁴

This immense drain upon the Gothic nation was to secure a century of repose to Moesia.⁵ But the Emperor who had repulsed this first and formidable invasion fell amid his triumph. A pestilence had aided him in setting free the provinces, but it carried him off at Sirmium (April, 270). He was but fifty-four, and his strong maturity promised the Empire a reparatory reign; for he loved justice, he desired discipline, and he was of those who knew how to maintain it. In the midst of the ambitious surnames which so many Emperors have received,—some for real, but more for problematic victories,—history should give the most honorable

¹ *Epistola ad Jun. Brocchum Illyricum tuentem* (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 8).

² Zonaras, xii. 26.

³ Reverse of a coin of Claudius II., bearing: IVVENTVS AVG. (Small bronze.) This coin, with the effigy of Hercules, makes allusion to the green old age of the Emperor, as Vergil says (*Aeneid*, vi. 304), —

Jam senior sed cruda dea viridisque senectus.

⁴ Treb. Pollio (*Claud.* 8–9): . . . *Impletæ barbaris servis Romanæ provinciae; factus colonus ex Gotho, nec ulla fuit regio quæ Gothum servum non haberet.* He speaks also of immense droves of oxen and sheep and *equarum quas fama nobilitat Celticarum.* (Cf. Zosimus, i. 46.)

⁵ . . . *Pulsi per longa saecula siluerunt immobiles* (Amm. Marellinus, xxxi. 5).

mention to that of Claudius Gothicus. The nations long remembered him. As late as the time of Constantine, Eumenes says: "Why did he not longer remain the protector of men, and later become the companion of the gods?"¹

At news of the death of Claudius the legions of Aquileia proclaimed his brother, M. Aurelius Quintillus, whom the Senate hastened to recognize. The soldiers of Pannonia had made, however, a better choice in naming Aurelian,² whom, according to some accounts, Claudius himself had designated as his successor. Such was the fame of this general that his rival did not even attempt to contend against him. After a reign of three weeks according to some, of several months according to others,⁴ Quintillus killed himself, or was put to death by soldiers whom his severity had incensed.



QUINTILLUS.³

II. — AURELIAN (270–275).⁵

"AFTER the ceremonies of the festival of Cybele," says Vopiscus, "the prefect of the city, Junius Tiberianus, took me in his chariot from the Palatine to the gardens of Varus, and we talked, among other things, of the history of the Emperors. When we came to the temple of the Sun dedicated by Aurelian, Tiberianus, who belonged to the family of this Emperor, asked me if any one had written his life. 'Certain Greeks have done it,' I said, 'but no Latins.' 'What!' exclaimed this upright man,⁶ 'a Thersites, a Sinon, and all the monsters of antiquity are known to us, posterity will also know them, and Aurelian, this valiant Emperor who has restored the world to Rome, will be to our descendants a stranger!

¹ *Panegy. Constantini*, 2.

² This is the statement of Zonaras; Zosimus does not give Aurelian the imperial dignity until after the death of Quintillus.

³ IMP. C. M. AVR. CL. QVINTILLVS AVG. around the radiate head of the Augustus. (Bronze coin.)

⁴ This is the statement of Zosimus. The number of coins of Quintillus that we possess (Eckhel, vii. 478; Cohen, v. 112–120) compel us to adopt the second opinion, which, moreover, agrees better with the early facts of Aurelian's reign.

⁵ L. Domitius Aurelianus.

⁶ Vopiseus says (*Aur.* 1) *sanctus*, using the word in its ancient sense.

Meanwhile we have his *Ephemerides*, in which he ordered to be registered his acts day by day.¹ I will cause these books, which are in the Ulpian library, to be given you, that you may represent Aurelian as he really was.’”



BUST OF CYBELE.³

These were rich materials which the highest magistrate of Rome offered to the historian. Vopiscus, a man of small mind and a poor writer, knew not how to avail himself of them. But the official documents which he drew from the archives are in many ways interesting; we have used some of them already, and shall use others hereafter.

Claudius had destroyed the great Gothic army, with the exception of some few bands which had found shelter here and there among the mountains, and later reappeared for a moment in the neighborhood of Anchialos and Nicopolis, where the country people proved strong enough to disperse them.² But, following the concerted plan,

there was to be a second invasion by way of Pannonia; the Vandals, the Juthungi, and the Alemanni were in motion. To arrest these new assailants, Claudius had turned northward and encamped

¹ *Ephemeridas . . . libris linteis (ibid.)*. The scene related in this passage has been placed about 291, or sixteen years after the death of Aurelian. Junius Tiberianus in this year held his second consulship, but not the urban prefecture. Many passages in ehaps. xlii. and xliii. prove that Vopiseus wrote his book after the accession of Constantius Chlorus (305). The father of Vopiseus had been among the intimate friends of Diocletian, and we have seen that the son was the companion of the urban prefect. These relations with the highest society in Rome placed him in a position to take advantage of the reminiscences of Aurelian's early companions in arms; but his feeble literary merit proves that this society was not very exacting in respect to mental gifts.

² This fact explains certain medals of Quintillus.

³ Roman work of the first century, found near Abbeville. (Marble in the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,918.)

his troops at Sirmium, a strong place not far from the point where the Save falls into the Danube, and the defensive centre of the entire region.

Aurelian was at this spot when the death of Claudius gave him the Empire. He was born, in 214,¹ in the neighborhood of this city, the son of a colonist of the senator Aurelius, whose name, according to usage, had been assumed by his freedman, and the latter had charge of a little farm belonging to his patron.² The mother of Aurelian had been a priestess of the Sun in the village where they lived, and he always preserved a special veneration for that divinity. We know his courage, his exploits, and the high offices which he had filled. Loaded with honors by Valerian, he had been, at the suggestion of that Emperor, received as adopted son or son-in-law into the family of Ulpus Crinitus, one of the great personages of the Empire, who claimed to be a descendant of Trajan; and thus the son of a Pannonian peasant became the heir to the household gods, the name, and the wealth of the most illustrious house in Rome.³

Very severe as to discipline, very exacting for the service, Aurelian exercised, however, a great influence over the troops, for the reason that they had often seen their general fighting like a common soldier, — a circumstance which, in the ancient wars, added prestige to a chief. There was talk of many enemies whom he had slain, and he was known in the camps as “the iron-handed Aurelian.”⁴ Being the bravest, it was permitted him to be the most severe. A soldier had offered insult to the wife of the man

¹ Malalas (xii. 301) makes him sixty-one years of age at the time of his death, which fixes the date of his birth in 214; Tillemont and Wietersheim place it in 212. The *Alexandrian Chronicle* makes him seventy-five at his death; but the facts of his reign, medals, and other considerations, do not permit us to attribute to him this advanced age.

² *Colonus*, says the author of the *Epitome*, 35.

³ Vopiscus speaks, following documents which he gives as official, of a formal adoption: but as Aurelian did not take the name of Ulpus Crinitus, which he would have done, according to usage, had he been adopted, we feel obliged to doubt the authenticity of the act. On the other hand, both inscriptions (Orelli, Nos. 1,032 and 5,552) and coins (Eckhel, vii. 487) give him as a wife Ulpia Severina. If this Ulpia was the daughter of Crinitus, the marriage would have secured to Aurelian the same advantages as an adoption, while had he been the adopted son of Ulpus Crinitus he could not have married her who had thus become legally his sister. Many ancient rules had, however, fallen into desuetude, and it is possible that both the adoption and the marriage did take place.

⁴ This is rather a mediæval equivalent than an exact translation of the Latin *manu ad ferrum* (*Aur.* 6), “Aurelian, sword in hand.”

with whom he was quartered: Aurelian ordered him to be bound between two trees bent together, which tore him asunder as they sprang back into their place. On one occasion he wrote to an officer: "If you desire to be a tribune, if you wish even to live, restrain the soldier. Let no man steal a fowl or a sheep or so much as a bunch of grapes, or demand oil, salt, or wood. Each must be content with his rations: what the state provides is enough; booty must be taken from the enemy, and must not cost tears to the provinces. See to it that weapons, clothing, and shoes are always in good condition, the pack-horses well groomed, the company's mule¹ cared for by each soldier in his turn, and all the forage used, so that none be sold. See that the soldiers be attended gratuitously by the surgeons, and prevent them from wasting their money in taverns or upon soothsayers; require them to conduct themselves decently in quarters, and let brawlers be beaten." Septimius Severus had been wont to speak thus, and this firmness had given him an illustrious reign; it had the same results in the case of Aurelian.

Like the great African, Aurelian was a man of strict morality, and disdainful of pleasure; like him, also, Aurelian did not hasten to receive the foolish acclamations of the Senate. He defeated the Juthungi, who threatened Rhaetia, and regulated the affairs of this frontier, which occupied several months. When he at last made the journey to Rome, he spoke haughtily in the curia. "I have gold for my friends," he said, "and I have steel for my foes."² It will soon be seen that these foes were not always on the frontiers. To have no cause to fear in Italy the old troops of Quintillus, he had brought home with him from Pannonia a large force. The Juthungi and Vandals deemed the occasion propitious to invade that province. Aurelian returned thither in all haste, sending before him the order to collect the grain and cattle within the fortresses. The shock was severe, and the victory indecisive. When night came, however, the enemy fell back, and Aurelian was able to cut off their route to the Danube. Menaced by famine in a desolated country, the Barbarians were ready to negotiate. Their envoys concealed fear under a show of arrogance, and the Emperor postponed

¹ *Mulum centuriatum*, the ordinance mule.

² Some uncertainty exists in regard to the order of events in the first months of Aurelian's reign. I have followed the account which seems to harmonize best with the known facts.

their audience until the following day. He then received them seated upon his tribunal, surrounded by a threatening military display. On each side, his principal officers on horseback; behind him, the



AURELIAN.¹

golden eagles of the legions, the effigies of the Emperors, the silver pikes which bore in gilt letters the names of the different corps; in the distance the army, as if ready to engage, ranged in a semicircle upon an eminence which brought it into full view.² Less

¹ Bust of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 122.

² Ἄ δὲ σύμπαντα ἀνατεταμένα προῦφαίνετο . . . (Dexippos, *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iii. 682; Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de legationibus*, p. 126).

skilful in concealing their feelings than were the Indians of North America, the Juthungi stood for a while abashed in the presence of this imposing spectacle; but their audacity soon returned to them. "We do not ask peace as those who have been conquered," said their interpreter, "but as former friends of the Romans, and as men who know that a battle lost by a surprise may be followed by a victory. Our nation alone numbers forty thousand cavalry, and twice as many foot; and Italy, which we have almost completely overrun, knows well our valor. In alliance with us you will have no enemy to fear; give us, therefore, the usual presents, the subsidies that we were receiving before the war, and let peace be made." Dexippos, who relates the scene, is a contemporary, but he puts in the mouth of Aurelian an improbably long reply, of which we give only the concluding words: "Since you have violated the treaties and pillaged our territory, you have no right to ask any favors, and it is your place to accept the conqueror's law. You know what became of the three hundred thousand Goths who invaded the Empire: the same fate awaits you. It is my intention to cross the Danube and punish you in your own homes for your broken faith." The Juthungi, completely intimidated, promised to return into their country. A few months later came another invasion of the Vandals and the Jazyges, and another victory on the part of Aurelian, who, to facilitate their retreat, supplied them with provisions. They gave up as hostages the sons of their chiefs and two thousand horsemen, who were included among the auxiliaries of the legions.¹ Aurelian, making a sacrifice on his part which must have cost his pride a pang, although it cost the Empire nothing, ceded Dacia to them, offering lands on the south of the Danube to those Roman colonists who were unwilling to remain in the province. This relinquishment was necessary, for Dacia, overrun from both sides, and invaded to its very centre, was no longer tenable. If there yet remained Romans in the province, and there were enough certainly to form a brave and noble population, there was no Roman administration except in Transylvania, where a few cohorts probably defended the gold-mines of that country, which had been worked by the Romans for

¹ Five hundred who had spread themselves abroad in order to plunder, were murdered by the commandant of the auxiliaries, and the Vandal king had their chief shot by his bowmen (*Ibid.* p. 686).

a century and a half. To produce the impression that nothing had been lost, a new Dacia was constructed out of a part of Moesia, and the name of Trajan's conquest still remained on the official list of the provinces. But instead of the Dacia of the mountains, a



ROMAN HORSEMAN.¹

fortress which would have been impregnable if it had been possible to close its gate on the lower Danube, it was the Dacia of the shore, *Dacia Ripensis*,² which no longer protected anything. At last the god Terminus fell back. For a victor, the condition was hard; Aurelian seems to have felt the need of protecting himself

¹ From the Museum of Naples.

² Between Upper and Lower Moesia. It was at first called *Dacia Aureliani* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 39); it was afterwards divided into *Dacia Ripensis*, with the capital Ratiaria (Arzar Palanka), and *Dacia Mediterranea*, with the capital Sardica (Triaditza). Dexippos does not mention (at least in the fragments which remain to us) the abandonment of Dacia, and the narrative of Eutropius (ix. 15) gives us no means of fixing the date of this event, which comes naturally after the double treaty with the Juthungi and the Vandals.

by the consent of his troops, as representatives of the Roman people. At least he consulted the army on the question of peace with the Vandals,¹ and the withdrawal of the Dacian garrisons must have been the tacitly accepted consequence of the terms of a treaty which the army approved. In the state of the Empire and of the Barbaric world the Danube appeared to be the best frontier; and the great successes of Claudius, and those even of Aurelian, prove that, while the river did not forbid invaders a passage, it at least made their return difficult.

We shall not, as easily as the Emperor, say adieu to this valiant Roman population of Dacia Trajana. Worthy of its origin, and of him who gave it its first cities, it played in the Carpathians the part of Pelagius and his companions in the Asturias, — braving all invasions from the height of this impregnable fortress, regaining foot by foot, as the waves retreated towards the West and South, the lost ground, and reconstituting, after sixteen centuries of fighting, a new Italy, *Tzarea Roumanesca*, whose advent into the rank of free nations is saluted by all the peoples of the Latin race.²

Aurelian had been obliged to resign himself to this blot upon his name on account of a fresh invasion of Italy by the Alemanni and Juthungi. In the hope of exterminating this horde, or capturing it wholly, he undertook to imitate the plan of Claudius at Naïssus; namely, to have an attack made from the front upon the invaders by the larger part of the Roman army in the plain of the Po, while he himself, the praetorians and auxiliaries, should cut off their retreat. This division of the forces occasioned a disaster. The Barbarians, emerging in the evening from dense woods in which they had concealed themselves, surprised near Placentia the Romans, who were not keeping careful watch. Many of the legionaries perished, and a part of Cisalpine Gaul fell a prey to the most frightful devastation. From the Alps to the Straits of Messina there was a moment of terror, as lately there

¹ Dexippos (*Fragm. hist. Graec.* iii. 685): . . . ἐρομένου βασιλέως, ὃ τι σφίσι περὶ τῶν παρόντων λόγον εἶναι δοκεῖ.

² I cannot accept the opinion of Rösler (*Dacier und Romänen*, Vienna, 1866), which makes the Wallachians return into Dacia in the beginning of the thirteenth century, any more than that which maintains that among these millions of men who speak a language of Latin derivation there are not numerous descendants of Trajan's colonists.

had been in the peninsula of the Balkans at the approach of the great Gothic army.

To calm these terrors, recourse was had to religious expiations. Aurelian, who knew what good use could be made, in leading the crowd, of the intervention of the gods and all the paraphernalia of old superstitions, wrote to the Senate the following letter, which the urban praetor read aloud in the curia: "I am surprised, revered Fathers, that you have so long delayed to open the Sibylline books; you conduct yourselves like men met in a church of Christians rather than in a temple of the gods. Act now at least, and by the sacredness of pontiffs and the solemnities of religion aid the ruler who is in a position of such difficulty. It is never a disgrace to have the assistance of the gods in conquering an enemy. It is thus that our ancestors undertook and terminated so many wars."

AURELIAN.¹

Before the arrival of this letter a similar proposition had been made in the Senate; but the sceptical and the Emperor's courtiers had turned it into ridicule, averring that Aurelian stood in no need of supernatural assistance. The imperial message, however, changed these sentiments; and the first senator who was called upon by the consul in charge reproached the Conscript Fathers with being so inconsiderate in regard to the safety of the state, and so slow in having recourse to the books of destiny and taking advantage of the favors of Apollo.² "Go, then," he said, "holy pontiffs, you who are pure, irreproachable, and sacred; go in sacred attire and with a pious mind; go up to the temple and prepare there seats wreathed with laurel; open with your respected hands the books of religion; seek therein the eternal destinies of the state; teach to children whose parents are living, the hymn which they are to sing. We will decide upon the expense necessary for this ceremony, we will order the preparations for the sacrifices, and fix the day for the lustration of the fields."³ (Session of January 10, 271.)

The city was solemnly purified, sacred hymns were sung, a

¹ Aurelian crowned with laurel. (Gold coin.)

² The Sibylline oracles were believed to be inspired by Apollo.

³ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 19.

procession went through the streets; lastly, sacrifices were offered, in places indicated by the sacred books, to prevent the Barbarians from passing over them.¹ Vopiscus does not say that these expiations were human sacrifices; but Aurelian offered captives of every nation:² and this could have been no other than the ancient custom of burying alive men whose offended shades would arrest

the march of their compatriots.

At the same time that Aurelian took measures to propitiate the gods, he also prepared his campaign against the Barbarians. The latter, who entered upon war rather for the sake of plunder than of gaining territory, had divided, in order to extend their depredations. They seem to have advanced as far as the Metaurus, which would indicate an intention of marching upon Rome,—the supreme ambition of all



HERCULES KILLING DIOMEDES.³

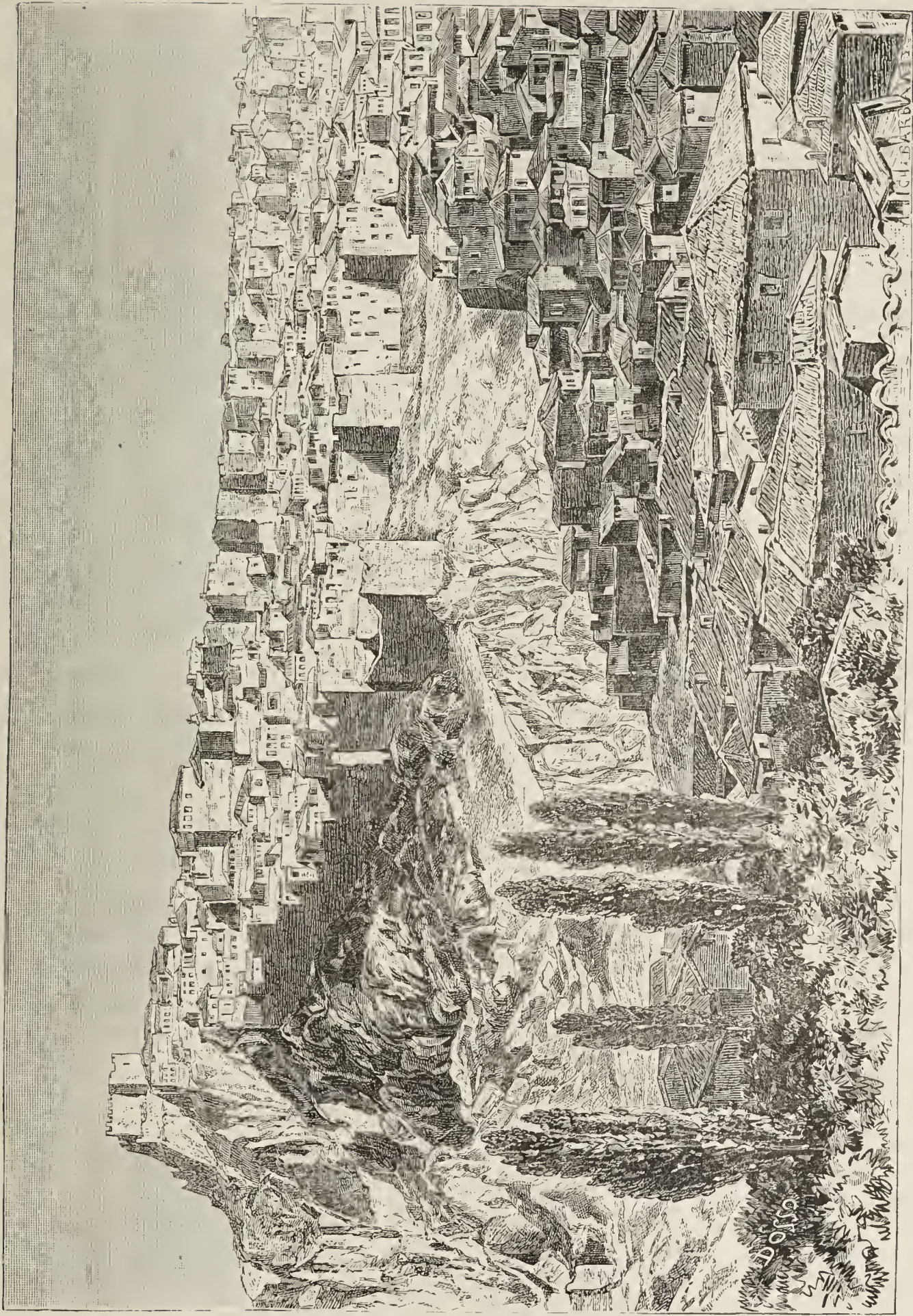
these marauders. At least, there exists an inscription⁴ in which the cities of Pesaro and Fano return thanks to “Hercules Augustus, colleague of the invincible Aurelian,” — doubtless for some exploit of war achieved in their neighborhood. Aurelian pursued these bands, destroying them one after another; near Pavia he encountered the main body of the Barbarian army, and inflicted upon it a great defeat. And, once more, of these invaders but few

¹ *In certis locis sacrificia fierent quae barbari transire non possent* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 18).

² . . . *Cujuslibet gentis captos* (*ibid.* 20).

³ Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France* (cornelian of 19 millim. by 15), No. 1,771 of the Catalogue.

⁴ Orelli, Nos. 1,031 and 1,535.

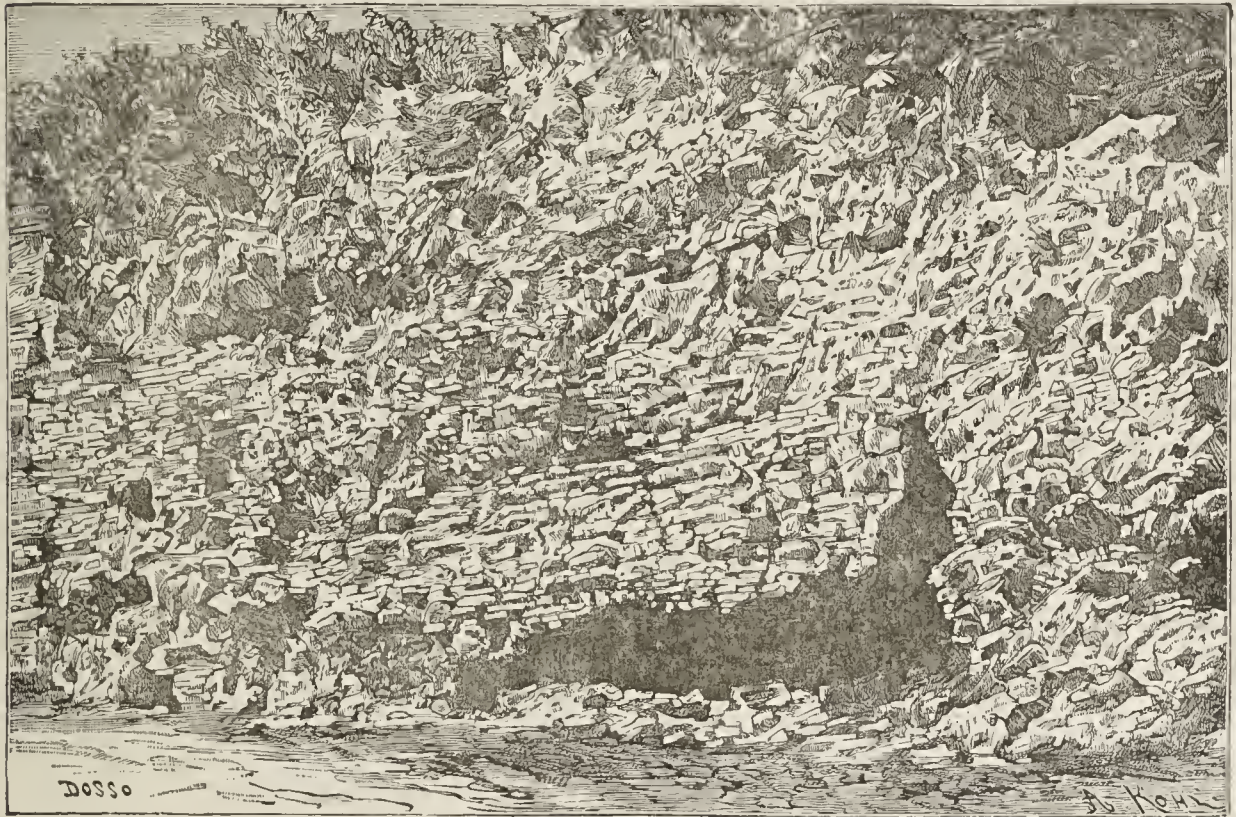


ANCYRA (ANGORA), FROM PERROT'S EXPLOR. ARCHÉOL. DE LA GALATIE, ETC.

The Library
of the
University of Minnesota.

ever again beheld the paternal hut concealed in the vast forests of the Neckar and the Mein.

What went on at Rome during this campaign? No doubt, there was much ridicule of the Pannonian who suffered the sovereign people to experience so great anxiety. It is possible that his statues may have been overthrown, and some of his people or his soldiers slain. Certain it is there were great riots, for Vopiscus



REMAINS OF AURELIAN'S WALL.¹

speaks of violent seditions.² The valiant soldier who had passed his life fighting for the Empire, regarded this tumult as treasonable, and severely punished those who were guilty, and even senators were put to death.³

Long ago, Rome, in the security which her fortune and her sway gave her, had gone beyond her boundaries, and the wall of Servius was disappearing under the houses and gardens which covered the vast embankment and the base of the *agger*.⁴ The

¹ From a photograph by Parker.

² *Romam petit vindictae cupidus, quam seditionum asperitas suggerebat* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 18 and 21; cf. *Amm. Marcellinus*, xxx. 8).

³ Zosimus speaks of conspiracies, and of conspirators justly punished, among whom he mentions three senators.

⁴ Accordingly, Zosimus says (i. 19) of the Rome of that day that it was ἀτείχιστος.

enemy approaching, Aurelian resolved to return to the precautions of earlier days. It was a humiliating but necessary avowal. He gave Rome a second wall, outside of the first, which was completed by Probus; this was about eleven miles in circumference (271).¹ This new line of fortifications is further marked by the wall of Honorius, so called because of the repairs made by that Emperor.

The Barbarians being repulsed, and Rome placed in safety from a sudden attack, Aurelian turned his attention to the two competitors who kept the eastern and western parts of the Empire outside of his control, Zenobia and Tetricus. The latter was the nearer; but he appeared the less dangerous of the two, and Aurelian had private reasons for feeling no dread of him.² The Emperor therefore made his first attack upon the queen of Palmyra.

Odenathus, victorious over Sapor, whose capital he had twice insulted by planting his arrows in the gates of Ctesiphon, had been invested by Gallienus with the command of all the Roman forces in the East, and had even been associated in the Empire. He was making ready to deliver Asia Minor from the Goths, when, in 266–267, he fell a victim to one of those tragedies so frequent in the royal houses of the East.³ One day, in a royal hunt, his nephew Maeonios shot the first arrow and killed the game. It was contrary to etiquette, which reserved this to the king; and Odenathus angrily reproofed the young man. Maeonios paid no attention to the reproof. Ambition to be considered the most skilful hunter in the desert deprived him of all prudence; twice again his arrows anticipated those of the king. The insult was public. Odenathus took from him his horse,—which was equivalent to depriving him of his rank; and when the violent youth broke forth in threats, he caused him to be thrown into prison. Being set free at the entreaty of Herodes, the king's eldest son, the Arab cherished in his heart a bitter animosity, and, with the aid

¹ I follow Piale's correction (*Delle Mura Aureliane*), which, in the text of Vopiscus (*Aur.* 39), *quingaginta prope millia*, understands *pedum*, and not *passuum*; 50,000 Roman feet making about eleven miles.

² Eckhel (vii. 456) thinks even that the negotiation of which we shall shortly speak had been begun under Claudius. Coins exist in which are represented Claudius and Tetricus, one on either side (De Boze, *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* xxvi. 515).

³ The date of the death of Odenathus is determined by the Alexandrian coins; it occurred between the 29th of August, 266, and the 28th of August, 267.



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